

Jordan agrees to Moroccan proposal

TUNIS (AP) — Jordan has agreed to a Moroccan proposal to convene the 94th ordinary session of the Arab League Council in Tunis Thursday, raising to five the number of Arab countries which have agreed to the proposal. The others are Iraq, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. In a memo delivered to the Arab League Headquarters by its permanent envoy to the league, Jordan said it agrees to the proposal to convene the meeting at the level of permanent delegates provided that the gathering is limited to an opening session at that level. The Moroccan proposal, which called on all 21 members of the Arab League to attend the meeting, said that the gathering will remain open after the opening session to offer the opportunity to Arab foreign ministers to decide on Arab participation at the United Nations General Assembly session, which opened this week and to set a date for a session of the Arab League Council. Permanent delegates to the Arab League secretariat are expected to meet Monday to prepare an agenda for the meeting.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الرأي»

Volume 15 Number 4503

AMMAN MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1990, RAB'U AWWAL 5, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Iraq sets deadline for KD exchange

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq Sunday gave holders of Kuwaiti dinars 12 days to exchange the currency at par for Iraqi dinars. A statement by Iraq's economic commission said each Kuwaiti dinar is worth nearly \$3.5 before Iraq's takeover of Kuwait Aug. 2 — would be exchanged for one Iraqi dinar. Baghdad's official exchange rate for its currency is just over \$2.2 the dinar. But outside Iraq it was worth barely a twelfth of that when before the invasion. The statement said the decision was made after "the merger of Iraq and Kuwait... and to prevent duplication in exchanging both currencies." It said banks have been ordered to start applying the new rule from Monday until Oct. 6, after which the Kuwaiti dinar will be an illegal currency.

Iran may turn to Moscow for nuclear power

NICOSIA (R) — Iran criticised West Germany for refusing to allow completion of a nuclear power station and said it might seek Soviet help to build other ones. Cooperation with Moscow would be "a logical consequence of the unacceptable attitude of West Germany," the official IRNA news agency Sunday quoted Tehran's atomic energy chief Reza Amrollahi as saying. Construction of the Bushehr plant was started by the West German firm Kraftwerk Union in the mid-1970s. All work except maintenance stopped after diplomatic ties soured following the 1979 revolution. Iraqi planes attacked the plant six times between 1984 and 1987 during the Gulf war. Iran, which has no operating atomic plants, agreed on nuclear power cooperation with the Soviet Union under accords signed in June 1989.

De Klerk in U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — South African President F.W. de Klerk arrived Sunday with what he said was a message of hope for democracy in his country and support for U.S. leadership in the Gulf crisis. In the first visit of a South African head of state in four decades, de Klerk is to meet with President George Bush and members of Congress. "We are proceeding irreversibly on the road to a new South Africa, where justice, the guarantees of constitutional democracy and the rule of law will bring lasting peace and prosperity to all our people," de Klerk said in a statement at Andrews air force base near Washington after he stepped off a South African airliner.

Ozal flies to U.S.

ANKARA (AP) — President Turgut Ozal flew to the United States Sunday for talks with U.S. President George Bush and other officials on the Gulf crisis. Ozal is expected to press for economic and military aid to offset Turkey's losses from an economic embargo on Iraq. Turkey's losses over a period of one year could be as high as \$7 billion, Turkish officials say. Ozal will meet Bush at the White House on Tuesday. He will also meet with Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and will receive a briefing from Colin Powell, head of the U.S. joint chiefs of staff.

Swiss vote for no new nuclear plants

GENEVA (R) — Swiss citizens voted this weekend to forbid the construction of nuclear power plants for the rest of the century but not to abandon nuclear power altogether. Voters in many traditional areas joined the anti-nuclear lobby in voting for a 10-year moratorium on building new plants, despite warnings of lower living standards and increased dependence on imported oil. "Nuclear energy is an economic absurdity with unlimited risks," Rene Longet, a socialist member of parliament, said during the campaign. The vote lasted several days and ended Sunday.

Many Bangladeshis prefer war risk

DHAKA (R) — Thousands of Bangladeshis still in Kuwait have ignored a call to leave, indicating they prefer the risk of a Gulf war to poverty in their homeland, a foreign Office spokesman said Sunday.

Iraq 'will destroy Mideast oil fields if Iraqis strangled'

'Iraq-Kuwait merger irreversible' • 'Israel will be turned into something different'

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iraq said Sunday it would destroy all Middle East oilfields if its people were strangled by foreign forces assembling in the Gulf region. The Iraqi leadership also said Iraq's merger with Kuwait was "an eternal decision" that was irreversible, and threatened that Israel would be "transformed into something different" if the United States provoked a military conflict.

"We will never allow anyone, whoever he may be, to strangle the people of Iraq without having himself strangled," said a communiqué from the Revolutionary Command Council, Iraq's highest decision-making body, and the ruling Baath Party.

"The oil areas in Saudi Arabia and in other states of the region, all the oil installations, will be rendered incapable of responding to the needs of those who came to us as occupiers in order to usurp our sovereignty, dignity and wealth," said the communiqué.

"The oil, the areas it is in and Israel will be transformed into something different from what they are now," said the statement.

"Israel will be included in all actions that affect the owners of the homeland in which the forces of evil and occupation have settled," it said, adding: "Then will be the flood."

The statement was issued after a joint meeting of the council and party earlier Sunday presided over by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The statement lashed out at the U.S.-led military buildup in Saudi Arabia and the surrounding waters that began after Iraq took over Kuwait on Aug. 2.

The troops buildup and subsequent sanctions imposed on Iraq were "reckless, odious and foolish behaviour," it said.

It warned that "a spark whether by accident or design could create a ghastly fire that will be followed by the deluge."

"To prevent this from happening, those concerned should pull out their troops, warplanes and naval fleets as soon as possible," it said.

"There can be no understanding under the threat of arms and punishment."

The statement said if Washington and its allies wanted to defuse the crisis, "they have to return to a specific idea which is that peace should prevail in the whole area and that rights should return to their legitimate owners, foremost among which are the people of Palestine."

Kuwait has thus been "restored to its people to be part of its original nation by an eternal decision from which there can be no retreat under any circumstances or conditions," the ruling council and party said.

Referring to Kuwait's former ruling family, Al Sabah, the communiqué said: "The blow dealt to what evil ruling clique, the agent of the foreigner, was an indispensable defensive measure."

(Continued on page 5)

Gulf war would be short but deadly — French defence chief

PARIS (R) — If war breaks out in the Gulf it will be relatively short but deadly, French Chief of Staff General Maurice Schmitt said in an interview Sunday.

Schmitt told French television there would be a high casualty toll if war erupted because of the sophistication of the Iraqi army. He declined to give estimated casualty figures.

Discounting predictions of a protracted conflict, he said: "I believe if war breaks out it will be relatively short."

The general denied reports that French troops currently sailing for Saudi Arabia would be deployed far closer to the front line than their American counterparts.

"They will be neither behind nor in front of the Americans," he said, referring to the force of 4,200 men due to reach the Red Sea port of Yanbu by Oct. 1 and be deployed by Oct. 5.

French forces would be under independent command but operations involving troops sent by 12 countries will be coordinated by the Saudis, he added.

There has been concern in France over reports that its soldiers could come under U.S. command.

The Defence Ministry has refused to say where the French will take up position but a highly-placed official source confirmed reports from the Gulf saying the troops will be deployed in the Haifa Al Baten area in northeast Saudi Arabia.

In Toulon, the last of the men ordered to the Gulf were due to leave Sunday night, the Defence Ministry said.

U.S. 'contingency plans'

Senior U.S. army and marine corps officers have drafted contingency plans to mount ground assaults against Iraq from as many as four directions, the Washington Post reported Sunday.

Quoting unidentified military officials, the newspaper said the complex combat operation would require U.S. troops to cross the Jordanian desert and Turkish mountains to get to the Iraqi frontier.

The aim, the officials said, would be to prevent Iraq from massing all 140,000 members of its elite Republican Guard against a U.S. force attacking Iraqi troops in Kuwait.

The contingency plans for a multi-front war against Iraq were part of the military options being prepared for President George Bush should a United Nations trade embargo fail to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait and the administration decide to pursue a military course, the Post said.

The officials were quoted as saying the strategy of opening multiple fronts against Iraq would also attempt to exploit the "weakness" of its military supply systems.

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Jordan insists on not being notified of Saudi expulsions

Combined agency dispatches

JORDAN HAS not been officially notified of any decision by Saudi Arabia to expel any Jordanian diplomat nor will take accusations carried by news agencies of spying seriously, a government spokesman said Sunday.

In an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) the press secretary of Prime Minister Mudar Badran said that the premier had not received official notification accusing any Jordanian diplomat employee in Saudi Arabia of spying.

"Jordan would not benefit anything from such a practice. We also do not take seriously any comment to that effect carried by the different news agencies," the press secretary said.

He pointed out that "Jordan has no intention to expel any Saudi diplomats from Jordan."

In another statement carried by the French News Agency (AFP), a foreign ministry official, who was not identified, said that the Jordanian embassy in the Saudi capital had also reported that it was not aware of any Saudi expulsion order.

The comments followed a report carried by the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) late Saturday that diplomats from Jordan, Yemen and Iraq were ordered expelled.

The Saudi statement gave no details on the number of diplomats asked to leave the Kingdom.

"In order to clarify the truth and the reality, we would like to point out that the Saudi authorities had noticed that those diplomats carried out activities which undermine the security of the kingdom and its safety and which are incompatible with the code of conduct and rules of diplomatic service," the Saudi statement said.

Baghdad said Saturday it was expelling the Saudi military attaché, along with those of the United States, Egypt and seven European Community countries.

Both Yemen and Jordan, while condemning the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, have opposed the buildup of U.S.-led foreign forces in the Gulf.

Israelis go on violent rampage against Gazans

PLO calls for escalation in uprising

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(Agencies) — Israelis went on a violent rampage, by attacking cars taking Arabs from the occupied Gaza Strip to work in Israel Sunday, apparently fuelled by the death of an Israeli soldier in Gaza, Palestinians said.

Israeli sources said the army would demolish the houses of the suspected assailants of 46-year-old reservist Amnon Pomerantz in Gaza's Bureij refugee camp Thursday.

Israelis emerged from a three-day Jewish new year's holiday and took their "revenge" by smashing the windows of Arab vehicles travelling to Ashkelon in Israel. Many Palestinians turned back.

Soldiers arrested more than 100 people in Bureij and confined the camp's 18,000 refugees to their homes.

Clashes flared in at least four other camps. Palestinians said. Israeli troops shot and wounded a 20-year-old resident of Khan

Younis camp. Arab officials at the Nasr hospital said.

At its regular weekly meeting, the Israeli cabinet was briefed by Defence Minister Moshe Arens and Chief of Staff Dan Shomron on Thursday's killing. Israel Radio said.

Lawmaker Uzi Landau of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud bloc proposed that the rules on opening fire be loosened.

"Whoever is masked and carrying axes should be fired on immediately," Landau said on Israel army radio. "And if soldiers or civilians are suddenly stoned they should be able to open fire to defend themselves."

Arens tightened firing regulations upon taking office in June in an effort to cut the death toll and lower the army's profile in the occupied territories.

Efraim Sneh, a former senior occupation official, was among moderates who counselled against harsh retaliation for Thursday's killing.

(Continued on page 4)

Politics rather than economics seen to guide Jordan-World Bank talks

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A top-level Jordanian economic team is now in Washington for talks with World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials on efforts to address the imbalances in the Kingdom's economy, particularly the effects of the Gulf crisis and international sanctions against Iraq, but politics rather than pure economy is expected to determine the outcome of the discussions, according to analysts and diplomats.

"Jordan will not find it easy sailing in Washington," commented a senior Asian diplomat working as an economic advisor to the United Nations. "First of all, the background to the discussions will be set by the Western powers — the big contributors to the World Bank — which would try to pressure Jordan into imposing a total isolation of Iraq and this is an area in which both sides will have to be careful about how they play their cards," noted the diplomat.

"Technically speaking, Jordan has a very strong case to present to the World Bank, especially in light of the positive economic progress it had achieved prior to the Aug. 2 explosion in the Gulf," he said referring to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

"Under normal circumstances, there should not be any problem whatsoever in Jordan getting most of what it would like to get from the World Bank, having already established that it is capable of adapting to new circumstances and adjusting itself. But, as one can clearly see, it is not a normal case anymore."

"I'd expect every effort by the big powers to secure a definite Jordanian commitment and action to further the Western-inspired campaign to isolate Iraq before the World Bank moves to help the Kingdom," he said.

"How Jordan will play its cards, particularly in view of its track record of total commitment to the United Nations Charter and resolutions, will determine the outcome."

"One of the factors in favour of Jordan is its status as a key link in the blockade of Iraq," he noted.

"To many in the West it is a weak link and this could play a major role in the Washington discussions."

Presenting a six-month assessment of the Kingdom's economic performance and the progress it has made to alleviate its economic problems, Basel Jaradneh, the finance minister, said last month that there were several highly positive indications that Jordan had taken the first few steps towards eventual economic recovery. The dinar was steadily supported by \$650 million in foreign exchange reserves, repatriate remittances were expected to reach \$800 million in 1990 (compared with \$640 million in 1989), certain sectors were showing definite growth after being stagnant for two years, and exports were expected to rise while imports were declining. The minister also expressed confidence that Jordan would be able to secure the London Club's agreement for Jordan to buy back part of its commercial debts, estimated at about \$1.3 billion of the total \$8.4 billion.

However, in his first formal comments on the state of the Jordanian economy after the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait, Jaradneh said last week that the Gulf crisis had totally changed the economic picture in Jordan and debt rescheduling or debt refinancing was not suitable under the present circumstances and that the Kingdom would be seeking debt reduction. Jordan does not qualify for debt write-offs since its per capita income exceeds the maximum of \$800 set under the Toronto protocol, which provides for debt relief for developing countries.

Levy and Modai press push for U.S. money

TEL AVIV (R) — Two Israeli cabinet ministers flew to the United States Sunday to ask Washington to help foot an estimated \$20 billion bill for settling Soviet Jewish immigrants.

But the visit by Foreign Minister David Levy and Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai comes as U.S. leaders wrestle with their own crisis over a budget deficit seriously exacerbated by the faceoff with Iraq in the Gulf. Last week Washington deferred an Israeli request for extra military aid.

Levy will meet West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher at the United Nations Monday, and officials said he might ask Bonn to help meet the cost of the influx because of the World War II.

Modai will similarly argue "historic responsibility" when he asks for aid from the U.S., Israel's main ally.

Modai told reporters before leaving that Washington should help pay because it had helped create the exodus. The U.S. had pressed for freedom to emigrate for Soviet citizens but put quotas on the number it would take in, he said.

Israel expects one million Soviet Jews in the next three to five years. The treasury estimates the cost of settling them at \$20 billion, well beyond its means.

Modai will meet Secretary of States James Baker and Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, as well as finance ministers attending the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Earlier this month Modai called on Washington to write off \$3.7 billion in Israeli debts after President George Bush said he would cancel \$7.1 billion owed by Egypt because of Cairo's stand against Iraq in the Gulf crisis.

"I don't understand the logic, certainly not the morality of the thing — he who is not paying his debts should be forgiven and who has been paying his debts throughout should be loaded with it," Modai said.

Modai said the write-off would save Israel \$400 million a year in interest and principal payments. He rejected claims that it would harm Israel's credit rating.

"Four hundred million dollars per annum I'll take even with the risks involved," he said.

Modai declined to say whether he would again press for the write-off, which some of his own advisers oppose and U.S. officials and congressmen say stands little chance of approval.

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Gulf crisis is top item for U.N. debate

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — French President Francois Mitterrand is expected to condemn Iraq for invading Kuwait and holding foreign "hostages" when the 45th General Assembly opens its debate Monday.

Mitterrand will usher in a chorus of denunciation of Iraq as an international outlaw as the annual three-week cycle of speakers before the 160-member assembly unfolds.

As customary in the nearly half-century of annual debate, Brazil will provide the first speaker, newly elected President Fernando Collor.

Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze will undoubtedly reinforce the attacks on Iraq when he speaks Tuesday, as will U.S. President George Bush, who addresses the assembly next Monday.

But Mitterrand will be the focus of attention Monday, due to French outrage over Iraq's alleged raids on European diplomatic compounds on Sept. 15.

France immediately called for an emergency meeting of the Security Council, which convened the next day and held a session that culminated in a unanimous denunciation of Iraq in the early hours of Sept. 16.

That resolution also warned Iraq that the Security Council would adopt other measures to punish Baghdad for its "transgressions" — which are expected to be passed at an extraordinary council meeting on Tuesday.

The council plan to adopt a resolution imposing an air embargo on Iraq, which would be the first time the world body ever levied such sanctions on a member.

Flights out of Iraq and Kuwait would be limited to those taking out refugees; inbound flights would be inspected, and would only be allowed to carry shipments of food or medicines approved by the Security Council.

Other countries must deny Iraq-bound flights permission to refuel, land, or fly over their territory. Force may not be used to stop planes, but they can be intercepted and ordered to land.

Nations breaking the embargo would be subject to secondary sanctions. Iraqi ships in other ports may be impounded if they could be used to break the current naval embargo, and all Iraqi assets are to be frozen.

"I think this will be a genuine turning point in human history," said Brian Urquhart, the former under secretary-general in charge of peacekeeping, who retired in 1986. "This will be the test of whether collective security is a valid response to aggression."

At Tuesday evening's session, Shevardnadze will preside over the 15-member council, also attended by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, British Foreign Minister Douglas Hurd, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and French Minister Roland Dumas.

The last time foreign ministers sat in the Security Council was in July 1987, when it adopted its peace plan for the Iran-Iraq war, Resolution 598. On that occasion, only the permanent five members and one other nation sent their foreign ministers. More are expected to attend Tuesday's council session.

The General Assembly, unlike the Security Council, has no enforcement powers. The tenor of the speeches in the General Assembly, however, and the resolutions it passes — particularly the consensus resolutions — are a powerful expression of the will of the world community.

Other speakers Monday will be the foreign ministers of Iceland, Seychelles, Poland, Argentina, Iran, Indonesia, Costa Rica and Guatemala, and the prime ministers of Papua New Guinea and St. Kitts and Nevis.

Ershad launches Gulf push

ABU DHABI (R) — Bangladesh President Hossain Mohammad Ershad said Sunday he was leading an effort by six Asian Muslim countries to get Iraq out of Kuwait.

Ershad told reporters in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during a Gulf visit that Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, and Brunei were also involved in the initiative.

"I want to make very clear the final condition is that Iraq must withdraw from Kuwait, and the legitimate government of Kuwait be restored before any discussion (with Iraq) can take place," he said.

"There cannot be any compromise on this subject," he added.

Ershad said the six were willing to mediate talks between Kuwait and Iraq only after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, whom he described as a friend, pulled his troops out.

Ershad said he had no plans to visit Baghdad but the six were preparing a joint message to send Iraq.

Their effort is unlikely to sway Iraq from its takeover of Kuwait but Arab diplomats said the move was more welcome support for Arab states allied against Iraq.

"We hope Iraq will accept a peace settlement. But if there is no such settlement... it has to be resolved because Iraq's staying in Kuwait will not be accepted," Ershad said.

Bangladesh and Pakistan have each pledged 5,000 troops to the international military buildup in the Gulf.

Ershad, after talks with UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, said Bangladesh would consider sending troops to any other Gulf state which requested help.

U.S. professor 'forgot' about his letter to King

CHAPEL HILL, North Carolina (R) — A professor, thrust into the spotlight by the televised response of His Majesty King Hussein to his letter, said Saturday he wrote to encourage the monarch's peace efforts.

Edwin Brown, 61, a professor at the University of North Carolina, told a reporter he had almost forgotten about his letter to the King.

The quiet, classics professor said he had been "baffled for a while" by reporters' questions when reached by telephone.

But after thinking for a moment he remembered: "It was a letter I wrote about a month ago to the King."

King Hussein, in a broadcast on Cable News Network Saturday, characterized the correspondence as "a thoughtful, perceptive, humane letter of encouragement from an American citizen."

He added "I shall... for as long as what remains of my life remember Mr. Brown's letter, and cherish his sentiments with gratitude."

Brown recalled, "I stressed in that letter that he must not despair of the decency and goodwill of the American people. We are not, as ordinary citizens, interested first and foremost in

keeping our oil supplies cheap. And that's got to be the shuffle sometimes."

Brown said he wrote to King Hussein because "I identified with anyone who was in such a minority and boxed in by so many more powerful forces. And I know from my own experience just a simple letter of encouragement is very timely."

"So I sat down and wrote him in hope that at least one of his hard-working secretaries would see it and appreciate it," Brown said.

"It never occurred to me they would actually go all the way to the top," said Brown, adding he had not received any previous acknowledgment of his letter.

He also did not know King Hussein would mention the letter and he had not watched the television broadcast.

Brown, who is teaching a course on ancient Greece and has "never been east of Rhodes," said he has never met the King.

Brown said he has sent letters to French President Francois Mitterrand and the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. He also wrote to Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov just after the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007 in October 1983.

U.S. scales back Saudi arms deal to \$10 b

By Rita Beamish
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President George Bush's administration, facing congressional resistance to a huge military sale, has scaled back its initial Saudi Arabia arms package to around \$10 billion according to sources.

The White House has announced that it will send Congress a request early this week seeking a two-phase arms sale to the Saudis.

"We want to get something that people will clearly support," said one official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "You want to package it such a way that it helps the Saudis and it's politically possible here."

The details were still being worked out over the weekend, but the pricing was expected to be in the neighborhood of \$10

billion for that phase, according to two administration officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The package was being formulated with an eye towards assurance of congressional passage, after initial negative reaction from the lawmakers to a larger package, said one official.

Saudi Arabia agreed to the formulation that would involve an immediate package of "things that are readily available in the U.S. inventory", and more arms to be requested of Congress early next year, officials said.

The first phase is expected to include items that the administration can prove will have immediate use and delivery — such as Tow anti-tank missiles, Patriot anti-aircraft and anti-missile systems and F-15 fighter jets, according to sources familiar with the deal.

Vietnam seeks help for its workers in Iraq

HANOI, (R) — Vietnam has urgently appealed to the United States, other countries and international bodies to help get food to its workers in Iraq, some of whom are near starvation.

A senior Foreign Ministry official said Baghdad told Hanoi last week it could provide food for Vietnam's 16,000 workers only until Oct. 1.

"The situation is critical", the official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters late Saturday. "Some are near starvation."

Several Western diplomats said Vietnam had asked their governments to help get food into Iraq and then get the workers out.

The official said Le Nai, a Vietnamese deputy foreign minister, asked Washington for help in a meeting with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon in New York on Sept. 20.

The meeting was mainly about the Cambodian conflict and U.S.-Vietnamese relations. But the plight of Vietnamese who, like tens of thousands of other Asians, have been stranded in the Gulf conflict since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait Aug. 2 was also raised.

The United States and Vietnam have no diplomatic relations. U.S. law classifies Vietnam as an enemy and there is a long-standing U.S. trade embargo against Hanoi.

The Foreign Ministry official said Vietnam got a positive response from the United States but gave no details.

He said the stranded Vietnamese included about 200 female nurses. Most of the others were male construction workers, many working on an irrigation project in northern Iraq.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran says its has MIG-29 jets

NICOSIA (R) — Iran, whose air force has long relied on an ageing fleet of U.S. fighter jets, has acquired MIG-29 fighters, Iranian television reported. One of the Soviet-designed aircraft, which Moscow first put into service in 1985, was shown Saturday's regular evening news wheeling out of a hangar, the Iranian news agency IRNA said. The plane was marked with the Iranian air force emblem. IRNA said the television reported that the MIG-29s would be put into operation this week to mark what Iran sees as the anniversary of the start of the Gulf war with Iraq. Iranian television did not say how many MIGs Iran had acquired, which country they were bought from or when they were purchased. In May 1989 Iran said it was buying new fighter-bombers from an unnamed country, but not the Soviet Union or the United States. Western defence analysts said at the time that North Korea could be a source for new fighter jets for Tehran.

Bomb kills two in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — A bomb explosion in west Beirut killed two people Saturday night as tension grew between rival Shi'ite Muslim militias, security sources said. They said the two died and were burned beyond recognition when a bomb blasted a residential street in Bourj Al Barajneh district, near Beirut airport. The bombing followed clashes between the pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God) and Syrian-backed Amal militiamen in the mostly Shi'ite southern suburb. The rivals, vying for supremacy over Lebanon's Shi'ite community, also duelled with artillery and multi-barrelled rocket-launchers along the strategic iqlim Al Toufah mountainous ridge, some 40 kilometres south of Beirut. The clashes were the latest in a series of violations of a ceasefire brokered earlier this month by Iran and Syria. More than 1,200 people are estimated to have been killed in the feud, which dates back to 1987. Hezbollah wants an Iranian-style Islamic republic in Lebanon. The more moderate Amal merely seeks reform to give Muslims more say in the Christian-dominated political system.

Cairo says 24 Egyptians killed in Iraq

CAIRO (R) — Egypt says at least 24 of its nationals have been killed in Iraq, some while trying to flee the country after Baghdad's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. President Hosni Mubarak ordered Interior Minister Mohammed Abdel Halim Musa to launch an inquiry into the killings. "Since August 2 until the day before yesterday (Thursday) 24 bodies of Egyptians working in Iraq arrived in Egypt," Al Ahram newspaper Sunday quoted Musa as saying. "We have definite information some of them died on the Iraqi-Jordanian border and all were killed violently and in brutal attacks," he told the semi-official newspaper after Mubarak ordered the inquiry Saturday. About 1.6 million Egyptians, mostly labourers, worked in Iraq before the invasion and 150,000 lived in Kuwait. Officials say 290,000 have returned, most after streaming destitute with other foreigners across Iraq's desert frontier with Jordan. Many refugees say Iraqi troops robbed them. Musa said that even before the invasion, autopsies on bodies of some Egyptians sent back from Iraq showed they had been murdered. Iraqi medical documents on the coffins said they died in accidents.

Prague to send 200 men to Gulf

CAPRI Italy (AP) — President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia said Saturday his country plans to send a force of 200 men to the Gulf as part of the multinational effort against Iraq. Havel, who is in Italy on a three-day visit, told reporters the 200 soldiers would be deployed in Saudi Arabia with equipment for use in defence against chemical weapons. He said the force would be sent as soon as possible. "We are ready," Havel was quoted as saying by the news agency AGI. "We only need to resolve some logistical problems." On another issue, he said Czechoslovakia hopes to become a full member of the European Community by the year 2,000. "That is the time necessary for the transformation of our economic system," he said. Havel travelled to this island off Naples to receive a literary award Sunday for his work as a playwright. On Monday, in Rome, he will hold talks with President Francesco Cossiga and Premier Giulio Andreotti and meet Pope John Paul II.

Egyptian ships on way to Saudi Arabia

SUEZ (AP) — Three Egyptian navy ships carrying troops and military equipment to Saudi Arabia entered the Suez Canal Sunday, a canal source said. The source, who declined to be named under the canal authority's regulations, said the three navy cargo ships were AL Sindbad, the Almos and Sharm Sheikh. The exact number of troops and kinds of equipment on board was not known. On Saturday, three ships carrying several thousand Egyptian troops along with their tanks, armoured personnel carriers, artillery and missile launchers arrived in the western Saudi port of Yanbu on the Red Sea.

VERY IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC

The third convoy carrying food and medical supplies for Iraqi children will leave Amman today, Monday Sept. 24, 1990 at 5:00 p.m. from the Seventh Circle heading along the Queen Alia International Airport highway. The convoy will be under the slogan "From the Stone Children, the Heroes of the Intifada in Palestine to the Children of Iraq." Members of the public and their children are invited to join the gathering bidding farewell to the convoy and express their solidarity with the Iraqi children.

Signed by the General Union of Voluntary Societies in Jordan.

Ben Bella seeks return to power after 25 years

By Philip Shehadi
Reuters

ALGIERS — Algeria's first president Ahmad Ben Bella, overthrown in a 1965 coup, returns from exile next Thursday hoping to overcome old grudges and sweep back to power.

He last returned from exile to an ecstatic popular welcome in 1962, when he presided over Algeria's independence after an eight-year war with France. Three years later he was toppled, thrown into jail and finally allowed to leave the country.

Old political enemies may not be pleased to see him back. They remember him as a ruthless, demagogic dictator. And he is an unknown quantity among Algeria's youth, who form 70 per cent of the population and are highly sceptical of the old generation of leaders.

"There is a place in Algeria for a man we can turn to in these troubled times," said opposition leader Said Saadi of the centre-left Rally for Culture and Democracy. "But is Ben Bella that man?"

Supporters say Ben Bella, a former professional footballer who looks strikingly young for his 71 years, is the leader Algeria needs to pull it out of economic crisis and end 28 years of socialist one-party rule that he himself set up.

They hope his Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA)

will win the country's first free general elections, expected early next year, either alone or in alliance with other parties.

The French press has compared Ben Bella to his former enemy Charles de Gaulle, who swept back to the French presidency in 1958 on a wave of nationalist sentiment that helped heal the wounds of World War II.

Ben Bella's loose mixture of Islam, Algerian and Arab nationalism and social democracy could have enormous popular appeal, his supporters say.

But opposition leaders like Saadi say he has not spelled out his platform. "He must show he is serious about democracy, without any double-talk. There are contradictions in his positions," he said.

Jailed by President Houari Boumedienne who overthrew him, Ben Bella was freed in 1980 by President Chadli Benjedid. He left Algeria for exile in France and Switzerland the following year.

He will return with 500 followers, some of whom have not seen their homeland for 25 years, on an Algerian passenger ship from Barcelona.

Since youth riots in October 1988 led to sweeping political reforms, Algeria has become a turbulent multi-party democracy polarised between Islamic fundamentalists and their more liberal opponents.

The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) trounced

the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) in local elections last June and has its sights set firmly on national power.

But 40 per cent of the electorate stayed away from the polls. The FLN, which Ben Bella helped establish in 1954, is floundering in internal conflict, stagnant leadership and a public image of corruption and mismanagement.

Pro-democracy parties have yet to build a solid national base, with the possible exception of the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) of another revolutionary war hero, Hocine Ait Ahmed.

Ben Bella could try to forge a broad coalition embracing much of the FLN, religious moderates alienated by extremist elements in the FLS, and democrats in search of a leader, political analysts say.

In a recent French television interview he said he was prepared to assume the presidency for a transitional period of up to two years.

But presidential elections are not due until 1993 and many of Ben Bella's former enemies, including FLN leaders, sided with Boumedienne in the 1965 coup.

"The Algerians of 1990 are no longer the Algerians of 1962. They have known three decades of confiscated political life," said FFS Secretary General Hachemi Nait Djoudi.

"Even hope has been taken from them."

Cairo editor wants anti-Palestinian action

CAIRO (AP) — A leading Egyptian commentator complained Saturday of a Palestinian "fifth column" in the Arab World. He demanded that Palestinians be denied entry into Egypt.

Editor Ibrahim Seda of the government's Akhbar Al Yom, a weekly newspaper with a circulation of more than a million, also urged that Palestinian residents be forced to sell their businesses and live off the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) if necessary.

And Seda called on President Hosni Mubarak's government to reconsider its position on the Palestinians' basic cause: a homeland in the Middle East.

Seda's attack and demands were unprecedented, the harshest ever by a reputable Egyptian commentator towards the PLO and the people it represents.

Seda in recent years has unleashed a number of scathing blasts at the organisation's Chairman Yasser Arafat and other leaders. But Saturday's front-page column, illustrated by a cartoon showing Arafat hugging an Arab with a knife poised to plunge into his back, marked the first time he widened the scope of his punch to include Palestinians generally.

Mubarak and other Egyptian officials always have said differences with the PLO cannot be allowed to affect Cairo's support of the Palestinians in their conflict with Israel.

There was no indication whether the article was inspired by the government as a warning to the PLO.

Headlined "the fifth column" the article cited many grievances against the Palestinians. But the strongest was their apparent support of Iraq.

"Yasser Arafat's elation at the invasion and occupation of Kuwait is not confined to the president of the so-called State of Palestine. It extends to 99 per cent of the Palestinian people," Seda wrote.

"They are all with Saddam Hussein, the thief of Baghdad... they are all against the rich people of Kuwait and other Gulf countries."

He said this "criminal" stance by the Palestinians destroys their case against Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

By fighting four wars against Israel for the Palestinian cause "turned Egypt from the richest to

the poorest country in the region," Seda wrote.

"Not a single Egyptian now can put up with the Palestinians more than he already has done in the face of their ingratitude, hatred and opportunism. The time has come for us now to reconsider our position (on) the Palestinians and their problem, which they do not want to solve, attacking anyone who tries to solve it for them honourably."

Seda addressed the article to Prime Minister Atef Sedki rather than Mubarak, who controls foreign policy.

While demanding that Palestinians be banned from entering Egypt, Seda said those already in the country should be permitted to stay.

But they should be required to liquidate their businesses and live either on their own money or on grants from the PLO's billions of dollars in bank deposits, Seda wrote.

Palestinians in Egypt are estimated at 50,000 to 60,000. Many are prosperous businessmen, owners of chains of grocery stores and other shops or trading companies. Egypt's 11 universities have several thousand Palestinian students.

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JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

MARKET PRICES

19:00	Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)	14:40	Bahrain, Sharjah (GF)
19:15	London (RJ)	15:25	Paris (AF)
19:30	Agaba (RJ)		
19:30	Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)		
22:35	Istanbul (RJ)		
09:30	Moscow (RJ)		

Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
12:30	Sana'a (LJ)
12:40	Bechar (RJ)
13:20	Cairo (MS)
13:35	Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
18:30	Paris (AF)
18:30	Istanbul (TK)
20:35	Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
12:30	Cairo (RJ)
13:15	New York, Montreal (RJ)
14:15	Frankfurt (RJ)
14:15	Moscow (RJ)
16:25	Istanbul (RJ)
17:25	Agaba (RJ)
20:45	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:20	Cairo (RJ)
21:30	Jeddah (RJ)
21:45	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:40	Abu Dhabi (RJ)

ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
18:40	Damascus (RJ)
18:45	Riyadh (RJ)
19:30	Dhahran (RJ)
19:30	Cairo (RJ)
19:30	Sana'a, Jeddah (RJ)
19:30	Laraca (RJ)
19:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
19:45	Bucharest (RJ)
19:45	Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 771111-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:30 Koran
15:45 Programme review
15:45 Children programmes
18:00 News summary
18:10 Local programme
19:30 Programme review
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Arabic series
21:40 Programme review
21:40 Local programmes
23:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Documentary
19:30 News in French
19:30 Weekly Sport magazine
19:30 News in Hebrew
19:45 Varieties
21:10 Murder She Wrote
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature film: "The Last Enemy"

PRAYER TIMES

05:43 Fajr
06:30 Sunrise/Duha
12:28 Dhuhur
15:55 'Asr
18:35 Maghreb
19:53 Isha

CHURCHES

Tel: 771111-19

Lower House condemns Saudi's oil cut-off to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday condemned Saudi Arabia's decision to cut off oil supplies to Jordan as a war of aggression against the Jordanian people and a violation of the means to defend themselves against the danger posed to the Arab world by Israel.

The statement, the first reaction from Jordan to Riyadh's decision taken on Sept. 19, said that cutting off the oil supplies to Jordan, under the present difficult circumstances, was bound to deter Jordan from confronting Israel's aggression which "would come any moment once the order comes for attack from the command of the foreign forces now present on Arab soil."

The statement said that events in the Gulf were closely connected to the Palestine problem and the ongoing Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine, the Syrian Golan Heights and Lebanon.

The statement condemned the idea of creating a foreign Zionist security alliance in Arab land in collaboration with some Arab regimes.

"The projected imperialist alliance is designed to help the United States to consolidate its hold over Arab wealth and the holy lands," said the statement. It said that the Lower House of Parliament calls the Arab World's attention to the danger inherent in such alliance and America's designs in the Arab region.

The statement issued by Parliament's emergency committee called on Arab countries in general and the nine states which refused

Parliamentarians form advisory committee to follow up relief works

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of seven parliament deputies Sunday formed an advisory committee to follow up relief work and report to Parliament.

The group, led by Deputy Abdullah Ensour, met with Her Royal Highness Princess Basma at her office and were briefed on assistance provided to the evacuees at their various centres, especially at the Andalus and Agaba camps, where they gather before their departure by air or sea.

The Parliament members expressed appreciation for the role played by the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund (QAF) and other organisations in dealing with the evacuees under the present circumstances and the collections and contributions they raise for solving their problems.

Head of a special higher governmental committee in charge of the evacuees affair, Salameh Hammad, presented a detailed briefing on the efforts carried out to alleviate the suffering of the evacuees and to repatriate them as soon as possible.

Apart from Ensour, the deputies included Issa Reimouni, Ziyad Al Shuweih, Mohammad Alawneh, Husni Shyah, Salameh Al Ghweiri and Tatta Al Shawwan. They are joined by Walid Asfour and Hamdi Tabbaa in the advisory committee.

Princess Basma, chairperson of QAF's board of trustees, had earlier formed an emergency committee grouping QAF, Save

People rush for fuel

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanians rushed on Sunday to fill their tanks with kerosene and fuel oil after Saudi Arabia abruptly stopped pumping crude oil to the Kingdom and the government said that it was studying rationing programmes.

"I took my car to the gas station this morning to fill it," Mohammad Najjar, a businessman, said Sunday while he waited his turn at a Shmeisani petrol station.

Drivers reportedly had no problems getting all the petrol they needed but many reported a shortage of kerosene or diesel oil — two heating fuels.

"I went to five stations but could not find kerosene," Saeed Hourani said. According to several gas stations contacted by the Jordan Times, there was a rush today for kerosene and fuel oil and "while they were at the station they of course filled their cars."

Other drivers said they would not try to stock up on products and were waiting to see what happens.

"The government, trying to play down the tense relations with Riyadh, said that the Saudi decision to cut off supplies was a commercial one. Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabet Al Taher reacted to the action by the Tapline company, by saying: "We will look at the issue and treat it as a debt issue."

Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem said that the issue was a "misunderstanding."

The Tapline company, in breach of its contract with the Jordanian government cut off supplies as of Thursday within only six hours notice. The company demanded that Jordan immediately pay \$46 million for previous oil supplied to the Kingdom.

Taher told the Jordan Times Saturday that the government was considering rationing oil products. He said the Kingdom had only "a few weeks' reserve supply."

He said that Jordan might revise its oil pricing policy. "So far the impact on people has not been determined and the country still has to look at its options," the minister said.

Since Jordanians depend solely on fuel for heating and with the winter season coming, the crunch is felt in a few weeks' time unless the government finds alternative sources.

Jordan used to get 83 per cent of its oil needs from Iraq but reduced its imports to nearly 40 per cent after Riyadh promised to supply at least half of the Kingdom's needs.

Although officially the action is described as a commercial issue, analysts see it as a clear political message expressing Saudi Arabia's anger towards Jordan, where popular sentiment is running high in favour of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

His Majesty King Hussein said he opposed Iraq's occupation and annexation of Kuwait but he had strongly criticised the U.S.-led military build-up in Saudi Arabia.

Analysts believe Riyadh was angered by a three-day conference of predominantly leftist groups in Amman. The conference, under Royal patronage, condemned Saudi Arabia for allowing foreign forces on its territory.

Foreign forces are in the Gulf for colonial motives — deputies

TAFILEH (J.T.) — Foreign forces and their allies are present in the Gulf region not for the sake of protecting Saudi Arabia from an alleged Iraqi aggression but rather for pure colonial motives, said two Parliament deputies Sunday.

Addressing a public rally in Tafleeh, Dr. Hosni Shiyab Salim Al Zoabi said that the "United States was striving to control the world's destiny by laying its hands on the oil fields of the Arab World after the end of the cold war and the emergence of new strategic alliances in Europe."

They said that the United States was seeking to impose its hegemony on world countries with the purpose of protecting its selfish interests. "The emergence of Iraq as a major deterrent power in the Arab World has motivated Washington to move fast and invade the Gulf soon after Iraq's takeover of Kuwait," they said.

"Arab masses from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean realise the real intentions and objectives of the United States and its allies and will do everything in their power to abort colonial plans designed to sow dissension among Arab states," they added.

In Irbid students of Yarmouk University held a march at the campus to show solidarity with the Iraqi people and support for His Majesty King Hussein's stand vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis and his support for the Palestinian people.

Hundreds of students who took part in the march raised Iraqi and Jordanian flags together with portraits of the King and the Iraqi president as well as posters voicing support for the King and condemning United States policies and its massing of troops in the Gulf region.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Open studio and workshop for artist Samia Zaru displaying paintings, sculptures and hand-painted fabrics. Location: off 2nd Circle, opposite Rosenthal (9:30-1:30 and 3:30-6:30).
- Archaeological exhibition entitled "Al Lajjun — a Roman Frontier Fort" at the Department of Antiquities' Registration and Research Centre, Jabal Amman.
- Islamic book exhibition at the Yarmouk University.
- Plastic art exhibition at the Jordan Plastic Art Association.

Anani urges independent policy

AMMAN (Petra) — Dr. Jawad Al Anani said Sunday that the Gulf crisis had brought on the surface many issues, affecting the future of the Arab World and its inter-relations and common mechanisms.

In his televised programme broadcast Sunday, Dr. Anani said that methods of national or regional development had been based on ideas imported from the West, which affected the Arab economic policies and trends.

Anani said the absence of original Arab economic and developmental patterns have resulted in applying imported patterns, diverting the economic paths to serve the capitalist economies and other economic blocs.

Anani noted that pan-Arab organisations and institutions were formed to be mini-replicating copies of their counterparts in the world. The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development was formed in line with the World Bank structure, for example.

Anani said that imported economic ideas had led to increased attachment to the West, and called for abandoning such imported ideas and "adopting our own patterns and styles, using democracy as a means for maintaining the common Arab economy that can face the great challenges of the future."

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Abdul Latif Arabiyat

Brotherhood seeks speakership

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Muslim Brotherhood at the Lower House of Parliament has nominated its spokesman Abdul Latif Arabiyat as their candidate for the House's speakership when Parliament convenes in an ordinary session next month.

Arabiyat made the statement himself to journalists at the Parliament building Sunday.

Arabiyat, who leads a group of 22 Muslim Brotherhood members in the House, said it was not important who was elected speaker, but what really mattered was the achievement of further gains for the democratisation process in Jordan since "Parliament is an important institution with independent powers for enacting legislations and for playing an active role in the country."

The nomination of Arabiyat raised to three the number of candidates running for the House speakership in addition to the incumbent Speaker Suleiman Alur. The other two are Laith Shbeilat and Atef Broush from the independent Islamic bloc.

The Swedish Red Cross Society (RCS) is considering an increase in the number of air flights in the future to cope with the demand and is working closely with the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society on providing relief supplies to evacuees.

Jordanians rally against U.S. presence in Gulf but privately disapprove of Iraqi takeover

AMMAN (R) — Saddam Hussein stares out at Jordanians almost everywhere in Amman — from the back of buses and taxis, in groceries, public gardens and streets.

To many Westerners, the posters show the features of a monster. To most Jordanians the Iraqi president is a hero who will crush Arab enemies and liberate Palestinian lands from Israel.

Such support for Saddam has mystified and angered the West. But Jordanians, many of Palestinian origin, see him as the only man able to stand up for a cause the world has largely ignored.

"Yes, we support Saddam wholly and fully and will do everything in our power to help him out of his crisis," said Tawfik Mahmoud, 19, an economics student.

"Victory will be achieved at the hands of Saddam," said Nada Al Dowaitar, a Palestinian mother of eight who has lost four brothers in the uprising against Israeli rule.

"He who has no country has no dignity," she said. "Death to us is better than a life of degradation... and Saddam has the power and strength to bring back our homes."

Diplomats believe at least 90 per cent of Jordanians support Saddam. "You can't deny the vigour and sincerity with which pro-Saddam views are held," said one Western diplomat.

"The reason why opinion is so polarised around an uncouth dictator is that nothing has been done for the Palestinians."

At least 6,000 people turned up for a sponsored walk in support of Iraq last week. The participation fee of one dinar (\$1.5) went to aid Iraqi children. So did the proceeds of a match between Jordanian and Iraqi soccer teams.

"Let us share bread and water with the people of our Arab Nation," trade unions appealed in newspapers.

"Because of the circumstances our Arab region is going through and the barbaric campaign against Iraq by the evil leaders of the United States, Zionists and their allies... we urge all our colleagues... to donate symbolic goods and money."

Throughout Amman, posters of Saddam picture him wearing an Arab headdress, civilian clothes or army fatigues. Some announce him as "the hero of liberation, the maker of victory and peace, the historic leader..."

Huge banners in squares near American and other Western embassies read: "Americans go home... leave our holy lands," and "The Arabian peninsula will be transformed into a second Vietnam."

Many Jordanians privately say they do not approve of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait but the issue at hand is the Western-led military buildup in the Gulf.

'The government of Jordan is doing its utmost to implement sanctions.'

Jordan is hostage of Gulf crisis — Crown Prince

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said in a message addressed to the National Association of Arab American (NAAA) that the government of Jordan was doing its utmost to implement U.N. Security Council-imposed sanctions against Iraq.

"Jordan has a long and consistent record of upholding the principle that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and this applies to conflict in the Middle East and ones further afield," the Prince said in a message, which was telecast Sunday morning.

The Crown Prince said Jordan now finds itself economically hostage to the Gulf crisis with its economy severely affected.

He said that the total cost of the Gulf crisis to Jordan had been estimated at more than \$2 billion annually.

Following is the text of the Crown Prince's address:

The Gulf crisis raises many important issues not only for the nations of the Middle East, but also for the world community at large. In talking to you this evening on the occasion of your annual convention, I would like to dwell on some of those issues as they relate to us here in Jordan and to our many good friends in the United States.

Jordan has a long and consistent record of upholding the principle that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible. This applies to conflicts in the Middle East and once further afield. Hence Jordan does not recognise the annexation of Kuwait.

Jordan is the only Arab country within its region that is neither oil-producing nor centrally-planned. Having an open economic system based on free enterprise and regional cooperation, Jordan finds itself economically hostage to the Gulf crisis. The exposure of the Jordanian economy to recent events exceeds by far that of any other nation. This exposure falls into the three compartments of relief, sanctions and medium-term financial implications.

The total cost of the crisis to Jordan has been estimated at more than \$2 billion annually.

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The total cost of the crisis to Jordan has been estimated at more than \$2 billion annually.

Sweden donates \$14m for evacuees

AMMAN (Petra) — The government of Sweden has donated \$14 million to evacuees in Jordan, including \$8 million for airlifting Asian evacuees to their respective countries.

The Swedish government helped repatriate 1,925 Bangladeshis to Dhaka, in coordination with the International Organisation for Migration and the United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation.

Currently 6 flights are being organised from Amman to Bombay to repatriate Indian evacuees.

The Swedish Red Cross Society (RCS) is considering an increase in the number of air flights in the future to cope with the demand and is working closely with the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society on providing relief supplies to evacuees.

Book on Jordan — 'an act of friendship and love'

By Serene Halasa Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A new book about Jordan will appear on the shelves October 10. The book, a journey through Jordan in pursuit of the present, was written by Vladimira Rossi Longhi, wife of the former Italian ambassador to Jordan, and an Italian journalist, Giuseppe Recchia. "This book has been written as an act of friendship and of love for Jordan and presented as fragments. Our intention is merely to suggest and to open the door for a better understanding, as a journey should appeal first of all to fantasy," the writers wrote in their introduction to the book.

"I lived in Jordan from 1975 to 1984, and from that time on I came to love this country, its people and their tradition," Longhi told the Jordan Times.

"If you come to love something you want other to share that love with you, and that is why I participated in writing this book. The book also carries a message for the future," Recchia said.

The writers who stayed in Jordan for six months to write the book, travelled around the country talking to people and sharing their experiences. "We talked to people in the streets, to bedouins, boys, girls, journalists, bankers, businessmen, professors. We also met with members of the Royal Family, His Majesty King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor, Princess Basma, Princess Sarvath and Princess Wijdan," Recchia said. Of their meeting with His Majesty King Hussein Recchia said: "The King was very friendly and cordial, a thing we came to admire and love. We asked him political questions, especially about the recent Gulf crisis and he was very frank and straightforward in his answers," Recchia added.

"We want the book to tell an honest and true account of Jordan. We want the world to come to know the truth about Jordan through this book not through the foreign media covering the Middle East," Recchia stressed.

During their stay in Jordan to write the book Recchia said that they were welcomed by all the people they came into contact with. "The people were very hospitable and nice to us and helped us create a book intended for them and written by them," Recchia said. He also added that the book would serve as a way to communicate with the rest of the world. "When the fear of war passes, this book will encourage tourists to come and experience the beauty of this country," Recchia said.

The writers expressed their intention to meet with the Pope in order to get him to write a message of peace in the book. "Like the King of Jordan, the Pope works hard for his country and we would like the Pope to participate in this book that has been written with passion to the people of Jordan," Recchia said.

The book is written in Italian and will be translated into English. It will sell at a retail price of JD 13.

Jordanians rally against U.S. presence in Gulf but privately disapprove of Iraqi takeover

AMMAN (R) — Saddam Hussein stares out at Jordanians almost everywhere in Amman — from the back of buses and taxis, in groceries, public gardens and streets.

To many Westerners, the posters show the features of a monster. To most Jordanians the Iraqi president is a hero who will crush Arab enemies and liberate Palestinian lands from Israel.

Such support for Saddam has mystified and angered the West. But Jordanians, many of Palestinian origin, see him as the only man able to stand up for a cause the world has largely ignored.

"Yes, we support Saddam wholly and fully and will do everything in our power to help him out of his crisis," said Tawfik Mahmoud, 19, an economics student.

"Victory will be achieved at the hands of Saddam," said Nada Al Dowaitar, a Palestinian mother of eight who has lost four brothers in the uprising against Israeli rule.

"He who has no country has no dignity," she said. "Death to us is better than a life of degradation... and Saddam has the power and strength to bring back our homes."

Diplomats believe at least 90 per cent of Jordanians support Saddam. "You can't deny the vigour and sincerity with which pro-Saddam views are held," said one Western diplomat.

"The reason why opinion is so polarised around an uncouth dictator is that nothing has been done for the Palestinians."

At least 6,000 people turned up for a sponsored walk in support of Iraq last week. The participation fee of one dinar (\$1.5) went to aid Iraqi children. So did the proceeds of a match between Jordanian and Iraqi soccer teams.

"Let us share bread and water with the people of our Arab Nation," trade unions appealed in newspapers.

"Because of the circumstances our Arab region is going through and the barbaric campaign against Iraq by the evil leaders of the United States, Zionists and their allies... we urge all our colleagues... to donate symbolic goods and money."

Throughout Amman, posters of Saddam picture him wearing an Arab headdress, civilian clothes or army fatigues. Some announce him as "the hero of liberation, the maker of victory and peace, the historic leader..."

Huge banners in squares near American and other Western embassies read: "Americans go home... leave our holy lands," and "The Arabian peninsula will be transformed into a second Vietnam."

Many Jordanians privately say they do not approve of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait but the issue at hand is the Western-led military buildup in the Gulf.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

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MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
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Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Way out of bounds

WHEN Iraq took over Kuwait on Aug. 2 His Majesty King Hussein immediately stressed the need to contain the crisis within the Arab family and warned against foreign intervention in the area. From that moment on, pushed and encouraged by the Americans, the Saudis and their allies in the Gulf and in the Arab World chose to ignore the King's warnings and went along with every step the U.S. has taken to pressure Iraq and strangle it. Every step the U.S. and its allies took was countered and matched by an Iraqi action that further complicated the problem and made a peaceful solution more difficult and less attainable. Jordan's leadership, however, relentlessly continued its efforts and is still doing so. King Hussein, with nearly four decades of political experience in the quagmires of the Middle East, has cautioned his fellow Arab leaders against resorting to a "foreign" and military solution to a basically Arab conflict. Events since Aug. 2 have proven the King's course and direction to be correct. But despite his efforts and those of other world leaders, notably the Soviet Union's, the region is still threatened by the grim possibility of a devastating war. And every day carries more revealing news on how destructive and devastating a war in the Gulf would be. Not only that. The U.S. has already started talking, presumably for the discomfort of the Saudis and their allies, of staying in the region even after the crisis was resolved one way or the other.

In his endeavours to defuse the crisis, King Hussein travelled everywhere that he could reach. He went to the U.S., Europe and to many countries in the Middle East. His last attempt has been his talks with King Hassan II of Morocco and President Chadli Benjedid of Algeria last Thursday.

From the beginning of the crisis, Jordan announced it was abiding by international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions. Jordan would not recognise Iraq's annexation of Kuwait and would abide by Security Council Resolution 661. However, because Jordan was one of the countries most adversely affected by the sanctions against Iraq, and in accordance with article 50 of the U.N. charter, the Jordanian government started talks with the U.N. to find a formula to implement the sanctions with the least possible damage to the country's economy. A package of international aid for Jordan, Turkey and Egypt is still being worked out at the U.N. Security Council. Jordan did not include in its list of losses the possibility of Saudi and Gulf states expelling Jordanian nationals or the effect of a boycott of Jordanian exports or the effect of an embargo on Jordanian imports. All these Jordan has suffered recently. Furthermore, on Aug. 22, Saudi Arabia offered to supply Jordan with half of its oil needs in order to cut the country's dependence on Iraqi oil. The Saudis had initially agreed to supply the Kingdom with one million barrels of oil in September. And Saudi oil started flowing in at the rate of 33,000 barrels per day. However, on Sept. 20 the Saudis, using an invalid and weak pretext reversed their decision and decided to deny Jordan the oil it had promised. More recently, Saudi Arabia announced that it was expelling a number of our diplomats.

One is at a loss to interpret the Saudi decisions. The Saudis are still dealing with the same Jordanians that have always gone out of their way to defend the Arab order, including Saudi Arabia's. We have done that in Kuwait in 1961, in Yemen in 1962, in Oman in the 1970s and in Mecca in 1980. Jordan's leadership is certainly the same. So are its principles and commitments.

Our brothers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf ought to realise that a war triggered by Western military troops massed on Saudi soil will harm Saudi Arabia itself first and foremost.

If Jordan is against foreign intervention in the region, it is only because Jordan is concerned about Arab lands, Arab wealth, the Arab order and well-being and future of all Arabs.

The crisis might have been contained by now had our Arab brothers listened to His Majesty's counsel and not acquiesced to foreign pressures and designs. Jordan will persist in its defence of the Arab nation and its ideals, especially of those who cannot see beyond their nose.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Sunday called on the American people to stop their president from committing an unforgivable crime directed not only against himself and his people but at mankind in general. By announcing that he would launch the first strike against Iraq, Bush has thus exposed Washington's real intention in the Gulf and refracted from a previous position in which he announced that the United States would not be the first to launch attack, said the paper. With this statement, Bush has now openly revealed his country's aggressive intentions without regard to the grave dangers to America's interests and those of the world at large, said the paper. Once it has launched the first strike, said the paper, the United States would never be able to escape the grave consequences and the result of the conflagration which would ensue in the Gulf. President Bush, said the paper, is now gambling with his own political future and the prestige of the United States as a super power as well as the interests of America's allies. He is advised to be more reasonable, and avert any major catastrophe for humanity as the world can never forgive nor forget America's criminal actions should its people, troops and president start a war in the Gulf region, the paper continued. The nations of the world, the paper added, realise too well that Bush is exploiting international legitimacy to achieve U.S. interests no matter what the cost might be.

Weekly Political Pulse

Let's send 'jaha' to Baghdad and Riyadh

ONE of the cornerstone of time honoured Arab traditions is to resort to "jaha" to resolve a seemingly intractable conflict between tribes or families. The more formidable the dispute, the bigger is the jaha used to settle it. The outstanding feature of this jaha method is that it rarely fails if ever. The Arab sense of honour and tradition requires that "request" of the jaha be honoured and accepted. In view of the fact that jaha tradition is a history honoured custom that never fails to deliver, it would seem that this is the very time when the Arab World should fall back to good old traditions and start thinking about forming a very high level jaha composed of the Arab leaders to visit

Baghdad and Riyadh. I cannot imagine how Iraqi President Saddam Hussein would turn down a sensible appeal from a visiting Arab delegation composed of all the Arab leaders including King Fahd. Likewise a similar high level Arab jaha visiting Riyadh would receive similar response from the leadership of Saudi Arabia. Imagine, if you please, that next Friday King Fahd and twenty other Arab heads of state suddenly drop in on President Saddam Hussein and in keeping with Arab traditions refuse to drink his coffee till he yields to their plea for Arab reconciliation and brotherhood. I would put the chances of success of such a move as high as 90 per cent, if not higher. As a

matter of fact, the embryonic Moroccan peace initiative entails such a recourse to good old Arab traditions. I believe this road would offer a breakthrough in an otherwise dead end road.

In normal and classical diplomatic initiatives, visiting delegations carry with them a definite and clear proposals to offer the other sides. In the case of the jaha idea, such formal presentations cannot be further from the true Arab tradition. The visiting Arab jaha would not be expected to carry with it anything resembling a formal proposal or a specific panacea. Rather the jaha would simply go to "sweeten" the atmosphere and

clear up the air between Baghdad and Riyadh. Once the jaha succeeds in clearing the air and showers the festive occasion with kisses and warm greetings, the stage would become set for a more formal give and take negotiations based on brotherhood rather than animosity and mistrust. The secret of the success of the Arab jaha path is that it speaks in generalities and in terms of principles to warm up the relations between the warring Arab countries or tribes as the case may be. I have a cause to believe that President Saddam Hussein would be much more forthcoming on a settlement of the Kuwaiti situation in a friendly and brotherly atmosphere than through the beating

of the drums of war behind his backyard.

It is hard to believe that an Arab jaha to Baghdad will come back empty handed especially if the purpose of such a jaha is simply to set the stage for a workable and peaceful resolution of the Gulf conflict. The main obstacle before such a scheme is, of course, to convince the various Arab leaders to participate in such a peaceful venture. One may count on Arab divinity especially in the person of King Fahd and President Saddam Hussein to accomplish this feat. As both King Fahd and President Hussein are most directly affected by any outbreak of war in their region and stand to lose the

most, if not all from such an eventuality, there is every reason to believe that both leaders would opt to exercise optimum statesmanship of historic proportions and facilitate the dispatch of jaha to their respective palaces. One hour-long meeting between King Fahd and President Hussein would offer greater opportunities for a peaceful resolution of the entire dimensions of the Gulf crisis than all the U.N. Security Council resolutions and all the troops in the region put together. All men of goodwill should promote such an encounter through the path of jaha and meanwhile, should abstain from fanning the war sentiment or propagating additional animosity.

In Saudi Arabia, doubts arise about wisdom of war

By David B. Ottaway

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Arabia is growing nervous about its new front-line status as tens of thousands of Western troops pour into Islam's holy land and bring with them the potential for a devastating war against another Muslim nation.

So far, the ruling Saud family seems to have accepted the enormous risks involved in the U.S.-led drive to roll back the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

The threat posed to the kingdom by President Saddam Hussein's invasion, combined with the rapid U.S. military buildup here, appears to have fortified King Fahd's resolve to engage in the raw political dealings among badly divided Arab nations that the Saudis have traditionally eschewed.

Most senior Saudi princes seem convinced that the price the kingdom may pay in war-related damage — and the billions of dollars it is already paying for American and other foreign troops — is worth it.

Yet there are signs that the mood may be changing. Talks with a wide variety of princes, officials, businessmen and ordinary people during the last month revealed an ambiguity creeping back into Saudi state-

ments about the wisdom of seeing the kingdom involved in a devastating war with Iraq despite the shadow that Mr. Hussein's unpredictable regime has cast over the Arabian Peninsula.

King Fahd's initial reluctance about having the kingdom turned into a launching pad for an American-led attack on another Arab nation was echoed by his defence minister, Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, at a news conference Sept. 2. Prince Sultan said Saudi Arabia would not allow itself to be used for any kind of military action by outside forces that was not purely in defence of the kingdom.

His statement was taken by outsiders as a temporary ploy by the government to entice Mr. Hussein to release American hostages by assuaging his fears of a U.S. attack. But it was warmly received among even the most pro-American Saudis.

This ambiguity toward going to war seemed to increase as Saudis began to realise that it might be months before the Bush administration and the U.S. military were deployed with sufficient strength to take any military steps toward liberating Kuwait.

As time goes by, there is also a clearer realisation that the

kingdom, particularly the Eastern Province, where its oil facilities are located, is likely to be a prime target for Iraqi missile attacks, perhaps involving chemical weapons.

Saudi society has not had to deal with self-sacrifice or war for decades. The kingdom avoided direct involvement in all the Arab-Israeli wars, concentrating instead on spending \$550 billion from its enormous oil earnings to build a modern country with a cradle-to-grave welfare system.

Suddenly, Western reporters are shattering nerves and self-confidence with probing questions about whether the Saudis are ready for missiles and poison gas. In an apparent indication that they now take such threats seriously, King Fahd had ordered gas masks purchased abroad for every Saudi and foreigner in the kingdom.

By the same token, Americans and other Westerners working at the big state-run oil company, Saudi Aramco, have sent home 4,000 of their dependents, while almost 600 workers, many of them Filipinos, have quit. These actions, too, have helped stir Saudi fears for the future and caused many to ask whether war with Iraq is worth it.

The sense of Saudi doubt

about the path the nation has embarked on comes through in informal conversations.

One oft-expressed desire is to see Mr. Hussein eliminated by an internal political upheaval or assassination at the hands of the Central Intelligence Agency or some other secret service.

"Remember, we have to continue living in this neighbourhood — and with Iraq," a Saudi remarked.

Many Saudis fear that time is on the side of Mr. Hussein and that he is slowly making headway with his anti-American and anti-Saudi propaganda among the Arab masses.

The Saudis were concerned enough to invite 350 Islamic religious leaders and scholars to the holy city of Mecca to discuss the theological justification for calling in non-Muslim troops.

They also made certain that the scholars toured Mecca and Medina so they could see that no "infidel" troops were there.

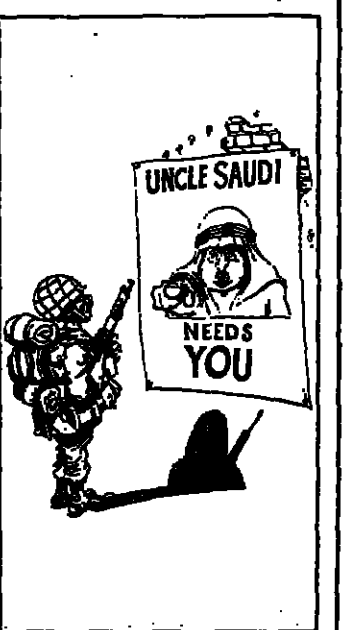
A senior Saudi government official, explaining his nervousness about the implications for the kingdom of a drawn-out struggle with Mr. Hussein, said he was sure the Iraqis would stir up demonstrations against the United States and Saudi Arabia throughout the Muslim world.

Asked how long he thought the kingdom could politically afford to sustain the large U.S. military presence, the official replied without hesitation. Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, which begins in mid-March.

The extreme outside limit, he said, was June, when Muslims make their pilgrimage to Mecca. Having 150,000 American troops still in the kingdom at the same time that one million to two million Muslims arrive from all over the world would be very embarrassing to the kingdom, he said.

Saudi and U.S. analysts have indicated that it is still possible that Mr. Hussein will dumbfound the world once again with a totally unexpected move: the withdrawal of his forces from Kuwait except the two northern islands of Warba and Bubiyan. That would still ensure him an outlet to the Gulf and control over a narrow strip of border land with its oil fields.

The Saudis are beginning to believe that this is precisely what Mr. Hussein intends to do because of the way Iraqis are reported to be systematically stripping Kuwait of everything from telephones and stoplights to hospital incubators and computers.



Such a partial Iraqi withdrawal could place Saudi Arabia and its Muslim and Western allies in a serious dilemma and undermine their unity. It might also undo the Saud family's resolve to risk war, because the potential marginal gains and President George Bush's relatively abstract goals of shaping international relations in the post-cold war era would no longer seem worth the risk of destruction — The Herald Tribune.

High emotion in a sea of caution

By Ian Aitken

THE recent emergency Commons debate on Kuwait was not especially moving. Unlike the patriotic fervour which marked the pre-Falklands sitting, the speeches did not quicken the pulse. Yet for all its understatement, I suspect that it will have done quite a lot for parliament's battered reputation among ordinary voters.

This may have something to do with the presence of the television cameras. Transfixed by their unblinking stare and confronted with a crisis vastly more dangerous than the Falklands, MPs abandoned the vulgarity which disfigures so many Commons "occasions." They listened to the arguments and complimented each other on their sincerity.

Even Mrs. Thatcher dropped the steamy rhetoric which she employs whenever she is out of reach of her minders. Instead, she used the kind of icy Whitehall prose which goes with careful preparation and a text drafted by a committee.

Mr. Kinnoch, too, renounced the wilder flights of oratory. But he did better than her, displaying not only the gravitas of a prospective prime minister but also employing language suited to the occasion. It was a memorable performance which has done his standing a great deal of good among his peers.

But if passion was largely absent from the debate, there was at least one moment of genuine, heart-stopping emotion. It happened about halfway through the second day when Eric Heffer was expressing his transparently genuine trade unionist's desire to see

the crisis ended by negotiation rather than by bloodshed.

Someone — I think it was Mr. Heffer's left-wing colleague, David Winnick — had risen to interrupt the flow of his oratory. Unusually, Mr. Heffer refused to yield. But by way of apology, he told MPs: "I'm not giving way. This may be my last speech in this House."

Almost everyone in the chamber, Labour and Conservative alike, knew what he meant. For the member for Liverpool Walton has for months been fighting a courageous rear-guard action against severe illness. Normally, one of the most assiduous attenders at debates, his appearances in the chamber have been sadly diminished.

His misfortune has profoundly touched even long-standing political enemies. Eric Heffer is one of those rare political creatures who combines fearless commitment with a gentleness of temperament more commonly associated with country parsons than inner-city MPs. He is benign and generous by nature, and his malignant illness has served only to make him more benign than ever.

So it is fair to say that there was a lump in most people's throats as they listened to this formidable old shop steward deliver what he clearly feared might be his swan song after 26 years at Westminster. As Michael Mates, chief chairman of the Commons defence committee, remarked immediately after he sat down: "No one could fail to be moved by the hon. member's remarks."

In fact, Mr. Heffer's speech — with that of his old campaigning partner, Tony Benn,

delivered the previous day — reflected a traditional strand of Labour hostility to all war based on anything smacking of "imperialism." He did not dissent from the general condemnation of Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. But he insisted that America and Britain would not have lifted a finger if Kuwait had been growing carrots instead of pumping oil. "It is imperialist oil interests," he declared, in almost his final sentence.

It is an argument which would have struck a chord with generations of long-dead Labour Party members, many of whom would have expected to hear the same sentiments from the opposition front bench. It no doubt motivated most of the 35 Labour MPs who joined Mr. Heffer in the No lobby on Friday, and was very likely shared by many Labour loyalists who went into the Aye lobby in obedience to their whips.

"It is now clear that whatever Mrs. Thatcher may say on television about her legal right to act unilaterally under this or that article of the U.N. Charter, powerful forces still exist inside the British and American Governments which recognise the crucial importance of the U.N. umbrella, and are prepared to oppose independent military action."

therefore undeniably a huge component of what we used to call imperialism. But it does not follow that action to secure reliable supplies of it on world markets should be dismissed out of hand as a squalid exercise to protect the profits of the

With such respectable roots, why did Mr. Heffer's sincere reservations and honest doubts fail to persuade more of his party to join him in the anti-

government lobby? Cynics would no doubt argue that the reason is an increasingly desperate anxiety in the Labour leadership to avoid any action or utterance which could alienate public opinion and threaten the prospect of winning the next election.

But it is not really necessary to find such hard-boiled reasons for rejecting Mr. Heffer's argument, even if we sympathise with his premise. It is true that oil is the lifeblood of modern capitalism and is international oil companies.

It is, to be sure, a sad truism that a threat to world carter supplies would not persuade President Bush to spend billions of dollars on shipping a vast hi-tech army into the wastes of Arabia Deserta. But it is not exactly surprising either, and its truth certainly does not mean that it is wrong to stop Iraq gaining control of a substantial proportion of the world's energy resources. If

Korea as a fluke.

Moreover, it is now clear that whatever Mrs. Thatcher may say on television about her legal right to act unilaterally under this or that article of the U.N. Charter, powerful forces still exist inside the British and American Governments which recognise the crucial importance of the U.N. umbrella, and are prepared to oppose independent military action.

That appeared to be the clear message contained in the closing passage of Douglas Hurd's impressive speech winding up the debate on Friday. With the eloquent lady sitting behind him as perhaps his main target, he declared that what was under discussion was not legalism but the "wisdom that efficacy of the way in which we should proceed."

Mr. Hurd seemed to be arguing, perhaps with deliberate obscurity, that to talk too freely about seeking Security Council authority for any further military action might encourage Saddam to hope for a Chinese or perhaps even a Soviet veto. That, he implied, would seriously weaken the best hope for a peaceful end to the crisis: the implantation in Saddam's mind of the conviction that he is certain to lose in the end.

If this interpretation is correct, it is a persuasive reason for being careful over what is said about the way events may unfold. Indeed, it may well have persuaded Mr. Kinnoch, who did not press the legal arguments as hard as had been expected. But in the meantime, perhaps someone could explain it all to You Know Who. After all, she started the argument in the first place — Guardian Weekly.

Israelis

(Continued from page 1)

who pelted them with stones for more than 90 minutes.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Sunday called on Palestinians to escalate the uprising and to confront "a new Israeli plan to step up the use of fire and gas bombs."

Bassam Abu Sharif, one of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's senior advisers, said: "The situation in the occupied territories has exploded and the Palestinian people have the right to resist the Israeli occupation forces with all means as described by the U.N. Charter."

That permits the use of force to resist occupation.

Abu Sharif did not spell out what intensified resistance would entail.

Since the uprising began in December 1987, Palestinians have mostly confronted Israeli forces with stones and gasoline bombs.

Palestinian hardliners have long urged the use of guns and bombs to fight the Israelis, but armed clashes have been rare.

The uprising has been eclipsed in recent weeks by the Gulf crisis and Abu Sharif's call was seen as an effort to refocus the spotlight on the uprising.

He said in a statement telefaxed to the Associated Press from PLO headquarters in Tunis that PLO leaders were in contact with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar on the situation in the occupied territories.

He said the Israeli army was sending reinforcements into the occupied territories in an apparent effort to quell the uprising.

Abu Sharif said hardline Shamir "and his government are going to be confronted with resistance all over."

He said clashes between Palestinians and Israelis "are severe" in Arab Jerusalem and the Sabour, Nablus, Toulkarem, Jenin, Ramallah and Bani Naim areas of the West Bank.

'Why do you not care?' pleads hostage in letter

IN a letter smuggled out of Kuwait a British financier makes a plea to the Prime Minister and the British people.

"I am a British male hostage, held against my will in Kuwait. My family, thank God, are safe in Britain, but presumably without definite news of me.

"For the past three weeks, like countless hundreds of others, I have been in hiding, never knowing if, or when, there will be a knock at the door. The tensions and stress are, at the best of times, unwelcome and, at the worst of times, unbearable.

"Like many hundreds of my fellow British, I ask the question of the British government and of the British people, 'why do you not care?'"

"We are fortunate that there is still substantial contact between British hostages and there is no doubt that all of us consider ourselves as forgotten and not cared about. And we ask this one simple question to the British government, 'what are you actually doing by sending forces?'"

"If the answer to this is 'enforcing U.N. sanctions and defending Saudi Arabia, et al,

from attack by Iraq,' then let us hear it clearly and unequivocally stated. Let us hear what Iraq has said is the key to the release of all hostages, namely that the USA, Britain, France etc. will not initiate hostilities against Iraq.

"If the real role of the various forces in the Gulf is to defend and/or to implement sanctions, then there is no earthly reason why each of the relevant Western nations cannot issue the undertakings requested by Iraq.

"Each time a Western leader, or minion, makes an attack on Iraq's president in the media, then the tension builds here, making it more uncomfortable for us. We beg you, switch brains to 'on' before opening mouths."

"The tone of the various statements issued from Great Britain and the USA leaves us doubting — and should make their populations doubt — the real aims of the Western forces. The people of Britain and Europe, specially, should be in no doubt that the real aim of the USA is to ensure that U.S. motorists may continue to pay 75p a gallon for their petrol.

"There may be further aims,

such as testing out new military equipment in desert conditions, but this 'stand for justice' by the West is in reality aimed at protecting the American economy."

"We, as British hostages, ask if this is actually our concern. You as, respectively, the British Prime Minister and the British people, should stop and carefully consider this. Do you, all of you, really put the liberation of Kuwait before the safety of British people?"

"Many of us are in contact with Kuwaitis who did not run away. Many of those left behind are bravely and at some risk to themselves assisting Westerners in many ways... these people are bitter about those who ran away. The growing feeling here is that the Al Sabaha family and the others who fled will not be welcomed back.

"It is not the position of a Briton, perhaps, to comment on their flight but Kuwaitis are asking how they managed to not only save themselves but also to pack personal possessions, secretaries, servants etc. as well. Any Kuwaiti is free to return, they are saying, so where are those who would

fight for their country?"

"None of us here disputes the fact that there has been a serious breach of international law and that such things cannot be tolerated. But this is not the Falklands. This is not a British — or anyone else's — possession to be won back.

"This is Kuwait, an Arab country and it is for the Arabs to solve the problem. Defend Saudi Arabia by all means but be fully aware that restoration of the status quo in Kuwait means the restoration of a little-liked bunch of totally self-centred and, by British standards, totally corrupt multi-billionaires to a position where they could continue to line their pockets even more.

"As hostages, in hiding, frightened, in some cases sick and, to a man, disgusted with the attitudes prevailing, we ask the British people to consider all the realities and to help us.

"Please, make your protest and make it loud and strong. Yes, stand up for what is right and decent but play straight and stop the British government pandering to every request of the President of the United States — Guardian Weekly.

LETTERS

Enough feeble excuses

To the Editor:

Occupation by American forces of our holy lands in Najd and Hijaz under the pretext of providing defence for Saudi Arabia in the face of alleged Iraqi aggression is a feeble excuse. The false claim was exposed by the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in his Sept. 5 statement before Congress when he said that the presence of American troops in Saudi Arabia will last for a long time, and that the United States should now work out the structure of a new security order for the region. He said that the United States has to play a role in this order, and so American forces' presence must be permanent. With this statement, Baker has thus revealed the real objectives of the imperialistic conspiracy directed against the Arab people, and exposed the false U.S. claims, justifying the deployment of U.S. troops in the Arab region.

Let us raise our voices in protest against the U.S. presence in Mecca.

Let us raise our voices in protest against the embargo which is depriving our children and people of milk and food, and our sick people of medicine.

Let us raise our voices so that our Arab lands can remain united and free.

Manal Younes Abdul Razzak
President of the Iraqi Women Federation.

A line in the sand

To the Editor:

I have just returned from the United States of America, where people are not as "united" as one may think, and certainly not 100 per cent behind President Bush, as the media would have us believe. There are various points of view regarding the "big manoeuvre" and drawing a line in the sand!

Upon returning to Amman I found a letter awaiting me which expresses the thoughts of many. My friend is highly educated, sophisticated, aware and intelligent. I know she will not mind if I quote the exact words.

"I am thinking about you and your family in that awful situation. May God protect all of you.

"I think (they) we should return all our servicemen and send, instead, the Bush administration, the Congress of the U.S., the crooks in the Savings and Loan scandal, the Defence Dept., the lobbyists, the oil companies, (executives), and the Aerospace (executives) companies, and let them confront the Iraqi military. The conflict would last about 30 minutes. The whole thing is a disgrace, perpetrated by a bunch of hypocritical bastards to increase our defence spending, thereby, making the oil barons and the Aerospace bandits even richer.

"I feel so helpless and angry that a few can do so much damage to so many."

May God protect all of us. Let us pray for peace.

Peggie Abu Jaber
Amman

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Iraq renews warning

(Continued from page 1)

move to maintain Iraq's features and resources and improve them in order to achieve the well-known noble objectives."

It also condemned the decision by the United Nations, strongly urged by Washington, to impose an international economic embargo on Iraq and Kuwait.

"America is committing deep criminal acts against Iraq and the Arab Nation, especially in occupying the Arab and Muslim holy places in Najd and Hejaz (Saudi Arabia), and in its sanctions imposed against the Iraqi people in a way that exceeds all humanitarian limits," it said.

"America did all this to satisfy its arrogance and enforce its hegemony on the entire world," the statement said.

"America must not go too far and must get out of its mind the idea of pushing events into a military collision, and it must realise the dangers

of what it calls a lightning strike," it said.

It urged the United States and other foreign powers to drop "the language of threats" and work instead for a "climate of understanding."

But it insisted it would not accept any settlement to the Gulf crisis unless based on Iraq's Aug. 12 peace initiative in which it linked a solution in Kuwait to an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

"America must realise clearly that it is pushing the entire region, and not only Iraq — in fact, even the whole world, foremost of which its sons whom (U.S. President George) Bush brought to the region — to the brink of a bottomless abyss, from which the region will never see light for dozens of years," it said.

On Friday, Saddam urged the Iraqi people to steel themselves for war and vowed there was no retreat from the Gulf crisis.

Iran rejects U.S. plan

(Continued from page 1)

paper said he "is likely to convey American requests for supporting the 'international will' against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait."

Assad was believed to be carrying a message for Rafsanjani from Washington, asking what it will take for Tehran to abide by the sanctions.

Part of the price-tag for Iran's agreement to enforce the sanctions, as well as the release of Western hostages in Lebanon, is believed to be releasing assets frozen by Washington more than a decade ago.

Iran's radicals have been dismayed that Assad has abandoned more than a decade of hostility towards the United States — as much out of expediency as hatred of Iraq — and backed Washington in the Gulf.

Editorials in the radical press suggested Rafsanjani is under great pressure by his hardline opponents to

aid Iraq.

Kayhan warned Assad that "no world leader or international body has the moral authority to tell Iran how to cultivate its post-war relations with Iraq."

Abbas said that the "Tehran talks cannot proceed on their natural course of a friendly visit unaffected by the 'Persian' Gulf crisis."

State-run Tehran Radio, run by Rafsanjani's brother, Mohammad Hashemi, was the lone pro-Assad voice in the Iranian media Sunday.

In a commentary aimed at justifying the dispatch of Syrian troops alongside the multinational forces, the radio said "Syria... believes that by sending a few military units to Saudi Arabia to confront the Iraqi incursion, it is possible to prevent the expansion of the U.S.-led Western influence in the region."

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Soviet Union 'faces disaster from radical programme'

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet Union, deadlocked on how to reform its economy, faces disaster and disintegration if it adopts a radical programme, the most senior government economist said in an interview published Sunday.

Deputy Prime Minister Leonid Abalkin told the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* that adoption of the radical approach favoured by President Mikhail Gorbachev would fail to revive the economy and weaken the will to introduce a market-based system.

Speaking ahead of key parliamentary votes on the economy, Abalkin attacked the leadership of the largest Soviet republic for approving the "500-day plan" which would strip the Kremlin of much power and establish market mechanisms by late 1992.

The giant Russian Federation, led by the popular Boris Yeltsin, is preparing to implement the plan, which Abalkin described as "essentially based on recognition of the liquidation of the USSR as a state."

The national parliament, the Supreme Soviet, is due to vote on a similar programme Monday. But it faces stiff opposition from Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov and his camp of moderate reformers.

Abalkin, one of the authors of Ryzhkov's more cautious set of economic proposals, said the country was on the edge of an abyss. "Any imprudent step could push us over,"

Abalkin believes the government will resign if the radical approach is adopted. Radicals have been asking Ryzhkov to step down for weeks.

President Mikhail Gorbachev, increasingly frustrated by parliament's indecision but anxious to avoid a government shake-up, has called for compromise. He has also asked for sweeping powers to push through reforms by decree.

Yeltsin, bruised in a car accident last week but bracing for confrontation with Gorbachev, has vowed to resist any extension of the already considerable presidential powers.

Poor states demand aid and debt relief to ease Gulf crisis

WASHINGTON (R) — Developing nations urged rich Western creditors Saturday to help poor states hardest hit by the Gulf crisis by increasing cut-rate loans and reducing the burden of existing debt.

Ministers from the Group of 24 (G-24) developing nations, who met Saturday to coordinate Third World strategy ahead of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank annual talks this week, agreed on a broad package of demands to help them cope with higher oil prices and expected slower world growth.

"They wish to see more relief of debt... from the creditors and more assistance from the fund," said Iranian central bank governor Sayyed Mohammad Hossein Adeli.

Developing nations want the World Bank to increase low-interest rate loans and say both the bank and IMF should be more ready to hand out the money to those in need.

But Adeli, who chaired the G-24 meeting, added, "there is not a question of creating any special fund at the moment."

G-24 ministers listed in a communiqué the economic costs that many developing nations would suffer as a consequence of the Gulf crisis.

They included rising import bills caused by spiralling oil prices, the high cost of resettling workers returning from the Gulf, a reduction in migrant workers' remittances and the loss of exports following the United Nations economic embargo against Iraq.

It said the World Bank and fund should try to persuade rich countries to provide loans and debt relief, especially to those countries most immediately affected by the crisis, which followed Iraq's takeover of Kuwait.

Adeli said the G-24 had not defined exactly which nations would be hurt first, but said the group could extend beyond the so-called frontline states of Egypt, Turkey and Jordan.

Western nations have already mobilised billions of aid dollars for these three countries, but Third World officials say the economic shock waves from the crisis will spread into poor Asian countries such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and beyond.

World Bank economists have calculated that even with oil prices under \$30 per barrel — current prices are around \$35 — the economies of 60 developing countries would be severely affected.

In an analysis of the crisis, they said that an average 1991 crude price of \$29 would lose oil-importing developing countries nearly one per cent of their gross domestic product next year — the equivalent of \$30 billion.

Poor nations would be hurt both directly by higher oil prices and by high world interest rates as industrial economies try to curb the inflationary impact of more expensive fuel.

The Group of Seven (G-7) richest countries, which also met in Washington Saturday, confirmed they would keep monetary policy steady to combat the Gulf crisis.

Developing nations fear their debt bill will grow even further if the G-7 raises interest rates.

G-24 ministers said creditors should cancel debts, or offer very cheap fresh loans, to the most debt-strapped low-income countries.

The G-24 warned creditors not to decide that oil producers needed less help with their debts because of the latest surge in crude prices. Oil producers could suffer a severe liquidity squeeze once prices decline again.

IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus last week suggested oil producers use windfall profits from surging crude prices to help developing countries.

"Many of these countries have their own problems," said Adeli. "If we think of the oil producing countries, there are some that are stranded right in the region where the present crisis has created lots of problems for them."

Bahrain's exports, imports fall

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain's exports in the second quarter of 1990 were down to 237 million dinars (\$629 million) against 268.8 million dinars (\$713 million) at the end of first quarter, 1990.

Bahrain Monetary Agency (BMA) figures show that oil income was 182 million dinars (\$483 million) in the same period against 220.1 million dinars (\$584 million) for the first quarter of 1990.

Bahrain, the smallest Gulf Arab oil exporter, produces about 42,000 barrels of oil per day.

Non-oil exports at the end of June, 1990, were slightly up to 55 million dinars (\$146 million) compared with 48.7 million dinars (\$129 million) at the end of March, 1990.

Bahrain's imports in the second quarter of 1990 fell to 286.8 million dinars (\$760 million) against 301.2 million dinars (\$799 million) in the first quarter.

Oil imports, mainly from Saudi Arabia, fell to 108.4 million dinars (\$287.5 million) at the end of June, from 127.7 million dinars (\$338.7 million) at the end of March, 1990.

Japan said considering Gulf aid fund with World Bank

WASHINGTON (R) — Japan is considering setting up a special fund at the World Bank that will be used to help aid countries hit by economic fallout of the Gulf crisis, international monetary sources said Saturday.

The fund, to be administered by the World Bank, will work as a vehicle to solicit contributions from other donor nations and to monitor the use of the money, the sources said.

"Japan is very enthusiastic about this idea and is willing to put up a substantial amount of money," one source said, adding that the World Bank has already accepted the idea.

The sources said some European countries are also interested in the Japanese plan and may consider making some contributions.

Tokyo pledged last week that it will provide \$2 billion to the so-called "frontline states" — Egypt, Jordan and Turkey — and other nations hit by the crisis triggered by the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait.

It said \$600 million of that will be available immediately to

Egypt, Jordan and Turkey on a bilateral basis, but it will decide when and how the remaining \$1.4 billion will be provided after consulting with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

But the sources said the United States does not seem very enthusiastic about the Japanese plan because Washington hopes to maintain as much control as possible over any multinational aid fund and wants the World Bank and other international financial organisations to play only a supplementary role.

Japanese officials have said Tokyo prefers giving aid through or with the World Bank or IMF rather than doing so bilaterally.

"If we were to provide money without having international organisations involved, we would simply be forced to put up more and more money in the future," said one Tokyo government official. "We're not the world's banker anyway."

The monetary sources also said World Bank President Barber Conable, in his address to the

IMF/World Bank annual meeting on Sept. 25, is expected to pledge emergency loans to the frontline states and other Gulf crisis-hit nations.

"This will be the first time for the World Bank to provide emergency loans to countries affected by the war or other political turmoil," another source said.

He said the World Bank's emergency loans has so far been extended to countries hit by natural disasters such as earthquakes or flood.

The sources said Conable will also announce in his speech that the World Bank will be ready to speed up the disbursement of its structural adjustment loans or other facilities to the crisis-hit nations and to expand the amount of such credits.

Japanese government sources said a communiqué issued Saturday by the Group of Seven (G-7) major nations has boosted Tokyo's position that the World Bank and IMF should play a key role in helping nations hit by the Gulf crisis.

"We are very happy about the communiqué because it adopted much of what we have advocated," said a senior Japanese finance ministry official.

He said Japan is particularly pleased that the G-7 — the United States, Japan, West Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Canada — called on the IMF to review the compensatory and contingency financing facility (CCFF).

The facility, under which emergency loans can be extended to compensate for sudden shortfalls in export earnings and help cushion the adverse impact of unforeseen external developments like rising oil prices, is what Tokyo has actively pushed over the past few weeks, the official said.

"The idea of expanding on a temporary basis and thus increasing the flexibility of the CCFF was a proposal Japan made and I believe all other countries approved of the idea," Finance Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto told a news conference after the G-7 meeting Saturday.

Report shows average Swiss earned biggest income in '89

WASHINGTON (AP) — The average Swiss earned the equivalent of \$30,270 last year, the highest level in the world, the World Bank has reported.

Five other European countries and Japan also outstripped the U.S. average of \$21,100. They were Luxembourg, \$24,860, Finland, \$22,060, Norway \$21,850, Sweden, \$21,710 and Iceland, \$21,240. The Japanese average was \$23,730.

Part but not all of the difference was due to the low value of the dollar on world exchanges, a bank spokesman said.

The figures do not necessarily reflect living standards. Prices are lower in the United States than in Japan, for example, and the average American enjoys more living space, a bigger car and a lot more meat than the average Japanese.

At the bottom of the list were impoverished Ethiopia and Tanzania, where the average citizen earned only \$120 in 1989.

The report said average income declined for 900 million people in 64 areas, half of them in southern Africa. It added that figures were not complete but there was also a fall in about a dozen Latin American countries and almost as many in an area that included Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Nevertheless, it found figures for the years 1987-9 an improvement over the 1980s as a whole.

About 2.4 billion lived in countries where incomes were growing. They included China, where the average rose to \$360 from the previous year's \$330, and India where the increase was from \$340 to \$350. China with 1,105 million people and India with 832 million

were the world's two most populous countries.

The bank called Asia's performance in the 1980s exceptional.

It found 2.9 billion people, more than half the world's population, in countries where the average was less than \$500, in those countries only about 56 per cent of the people knew how to read.

About 830 million lived in countries where the average income was higher than \$6,000 and their literacy rate was over 95 per cent.

"For those economies with life expectancy at birth of less than 50 years, the (individual) income averaged \$280," the report concluded. "For economies in which life expectancy was more than 73 years, the average... income is around \$18,000."

G-7 warns of higher inflation, slower growth from spiralling oil prices

WASHINGTON (AP) — Finance officials from the world's seven richest nations are now warning that spiralling oil prices pose a twin threat to the global economy: Higher inflation and slower growth.

The Group of Seven (G-7), in their first meetings since Iraq's takeover of Kuwait, discussed coordinated economic policies Saturday to keep the global economy from falling victim to Mideast turmoil.

After a full day of talks, the officials issued a communiqué noting "that the rise in the price of oil associated with the Gulf crisis poses two risks: A risk of inflation and a risk of lower economic growth."

They said "stability-oriented monetary policies and sound fiscal policies constitute the correct

policy response."

The finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the United States, Japan, West Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy and Canada met at the Blair House, the presidential guest residence near the White House.

Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady said the communiqué equally emphasises the danger of slower growth and greater inflation.

"There was no intention to say that one risk was greater than the other," Brady told reporters. "Government's job now... is to navigate between those two risks."

But West German Finance Minister Theo Waigel, in comments to reporters, emphasised the anti-inflation message in the statement.

Glamour stock Polly Peck faces worst crisis of turbulent history

LONDON (R) — Polly Peck, a fruit-to-electronics group which ended the 1980s as the world's best performing share, is facing the worst crisis in its 10-year history.

Its Turkish-Cypriot chairman Asil Nadir, an elegant and elusive figure, was interviewed by detectives from the Serious Fraud Office Thursday after Polly Peck shares collapsed.

Last week the board of Polly Peck, which owns the Sansui audio firm in Japan and Del Monte fresh fruit in the United States, has promised it will issue a detailed statement.

"This Polly Peck thing really needs to be sorted out. We need firm reassurances from the

board," one London share dealer, who declined to be named, said Sunday.

Thursday Polly Peck's market value plunged from £1.05 billion (\$1.93 billion) to less than £468 million (\$860 million) before its shares were suspended.

The share price dived after a flurry of rumours — some groundless ones said Nadir had been killed or arrested — and after fraud police visited South Audley Management Ltd, an investment firm linked with Nadir's family.

Polly Peck's collapse sent shares on London's stock exchange tumbling to their lowest for months in a market uneasy with fears of a world banking

crisis.

The board issued a terse statement Friday deploring attacks on Nadir, whose personal fortune shrank by £165 million (\$304 million) Thursday. It promised a fuller statement this week.

The Turkish government sprang to Nadir's side Friday accusing Greek Cypriots of trying to smear his successes.

In 10 years Nadir has transformed an obscure textile company into a powerful international conglomerate, making him Britain's 36th richest man.

"We drew the attention of British authorities two weeks ago to a campaign to malign Asil Nadir and his company, led by Greek Cypriot lobbies," a senior Tur-

kish government source said.

Nadir, 47, is a political ally of President Turgut Ozal and Polly Peck has built up press and industrial empires in Turkey.

Polly Peck, which Nadir acquired for just £300,000 (\$552,000) 10 years ago, is the world's third largest distributor of fresh produce, benefiting from the more adventurous tastes.

Investors in Polly Peck who spent £1,000 (\$1,840) in 1980 would have had a £1.3 million (\$2.4 million) investment last December when the glamour share peaked.

The group's history has been troubled and once in the early 1980s its shares lost a quarter of their value in 20 minutes.

Government rebuffs pleas for reducing British interest rate

LONDON (R) — The government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, faced with mounting threats of a recession, is ruling out an early cut in interest rates, despite pleas from industry and homeowners with mortgages.

Britain's economic picture is bleak, with rising unemployment, shelved investment plans, rumpling profits and stagnating output.

But Chancellor of the Exchequer John Major said last week at a meeting in Trinidad that "the siren voices of those calling for

action to boost demand and growth" would lead to higher inflation at a greater cost to output later.

Later Major, in Washington for a meeting of economic policymakers of industrial nations, said no relaxation of monetary policy was imminent.

The government has kept interest rates at an unpopularly high 15 per cent for almost a year now to beat down inflation, which last month reached an eight-year high of 10.6 per cent.

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Cambodian government accepts Sihanouk's compromise offer

PHNOM PENH (R) — Prime Minister Hun Sen has accepted a power-sharing deal proposed by his rival Prince Norodom Sihanouk for Cambodia's new Supreme National Council (SNC), a Foreign Ministry source said.

The leader of the Phnom Penh government was willing to go along with seating Sihanouk, titular head of a three-party guerrilla coalition, as chairman of the council, provided Phnom Penh was given another vote, the source said Saturday night.

Three days of talks in Bangkok this week between the Phnom Penh government and the guerrillas collapsed over the issue of how to seat Sihanouk as chairman of the council.

The coalition wanted Sihanouk to take a 13th place at the conference table, at which each side currently holds six seats.

On Friday, Sihanouk proposed that he be elected chairman and that Phnom Penh be given an extra vote.

The SNC is a key element of a U.N. Security Council plan to bring peace to Cambodia, riven

by 11 years of civil war.

It is supposed to negotiate a ceasefire and then represent Cambodian sovereignty while the United Nations virtually takes over the country before elections.

Hun Sen's acceptance of Sihanouk's plan appeared to clear the way for the SNC to meet again soon to discuss sending a unified delegation to the U.N. General Assembly and to start talks on a ceasefire.

There were other signs the Cambodian capital over the weekend that peace efforts might be about to intensify.

On Saturday, Phnom Penh radio reported that Hun Sen, a close associate of Hun Sen, had been appointed foreign minister. Hun Sen had been handling his government's foreign relations himself.

The appointment was made "to ease the duty of comrade Hun Sen".

Hun Sen is a professional diplomat who held ambassadorships both with the radical Khmer Rouge when they ran the country between 1975 and 1979

and with the Phnom Penh government installed by the Vietnamese after they drove out the Khmer Rouge.

He was the Khmer Rouge's ambassador to Cuba and the Vietnam-backed government's envoy to Poland, Mongolia and the Soviet Union.

An informed source said Hun Sen was preparing to return to Bangkok soon, another indication the peace process might be speeding up.

The Phnom Penh government and the guerrillas have come under increasing international pressure, especially from the superpowers, to put an end to their fighting.

The guerrilla alliance is made up of the Khmer Rouge, responsible for the deaths of more than a million Cambodians during their rule, and two smaller, less powerful armies loyal to former Prime Minister Son Sann and Sihanouk.

Hun Sen angrily blamed Sihanouk for the collapse of the Bangkok talks, the first meeting of the

SNC, calling the former monarch "a threat to the peace process." The view in Phnom Penh appeared to soften afterwards.

"Sihanouk is like the British weather," another Foreign Ministry source said. "One minute it is sunshine, the next rain, the next snow."

Foreign Ministry spokesman Chum Bun Rong said the Khmer Rouge delegation had been unusually friendly during the Bangkok meeting.

"The Khmer Rouge showed their softened position to us this time in Bangkok," he said. "They even smiled at us and asked us how we were."

Many senior officials of the Phnom Penh government, including Hun Sen himself, are former Khmer Rouge fighters.

Chum Bun Rong said fighting had eased in recent weeks as peace talks continued in Jakarta and later in Bangkok.

"The activity of the enemy seems to be reduced," he said. "There is more safety than before."

Colombia drug lords deny claiming responsibility for kidnappings

BOGOTA (R) — Colombian drug traffickers denied Saturday they made a telephone call claiming responsibility for kidnapping three prominent citizens as the mystery deepened over their fate.

But a statement from the top drug barons neither confirmed nor denied that they were holding the three, who include the daughter of a former president.

President Cesar Gaviria's six-week-old administration was plunged into its first crisis Wednesday when the editor of Colombia's biggest-selling newspaper El Tiempo, Francisco Santos, was seized by gunmen.

Marina Montoya, sister of a former top government official, was also abducted.

Their kidnapping followed that

of Diana Turbay, daughter of former President Julio Cesar Turbay, who has been missing with five other journalists since Aug. 30.

A caller claiming to represent the powerful Medellin cocaine cartel telephoned El Tiempo Thursday and said drug traffickers were responsible for kidnapping the three.

But a statement signed by the extraditables — top drug barons wanted in the United States — and sent to some media organisations Saturday disowned the telephone call.

"On Sept. 20, anonymous voices made calls to some media using the name of our organisation. It is not, has not been and

will not be our custom to make anonymous telephone calls to any media in the country," the statement said.

In the statement, the extraditables for the first time rejected Gaviria's offer this month to waive extradition to the United States and reduce jail terms for traffickers who surrendered and confessed.

Gaviria has ordered the extradition of three Colombians since taking office on Aug. 7. The drug barons declared war on the government in August, 1989, after officials began to vigorously enforce the laws and honour extradition requests by the United States. They declared a unilateral truce last July.

Bhutto ordered to answer charges in court

LAHORE, Pakistan (Agencies) — Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was ordered Sunday to appear before a special court to answer charges that could result in her being barred from next month's elections.

Justice Rashid Aziz Khan ordered Bhutto to appear in court on Oct. 2 to answer charges involving the sale of a luxury hotel and golf course in Islamabad.

Bhutto has not said whether she will appear, but the order setting up several one-judge courts to try members of the sacked government says any case can be settled without the accused being present.

The hotel case is at the centre of the interim government's efforts to prove that Bhutto and her former ministers abused their powers during their 20 months in office.

President Ghulam Ishaq Khan levelled numerous charges against Bhutto and her colleagues when he sacked her government on Aug. 6 and ordered fresh elections for Oct. 24.

The government, in its first major listing of charges since the sacking, told the Lahore High Court Saturday that Bhutto had diverted millions of dollars meant for intelligence gathering to buying the votes of opposition dissidents.

Attorney-General Aziz Munshi told the court, which is hearing a constitutional challenge to the dissolution of parliament, that his long list of allegations justified the president's action.

The caretaker government charged Saturday that Bhutto tapped the telephones of her political opponents as well as her own party members.

Munshi alleged that two of the most influential members of her government and her Pakistan People's Party had their phones tapped.

Carter believes free polls in store for Haiti

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter says he is optimistic that free elections would be held in Haiti.

"Although there are still problems in this country, I am convinced that a successful election will be held," he said Saturday after a two-day visit.

The visit by the former American president came amid growing doubts over the government's ability to hold elections this year.

Carter said the majority of Haitian people wanted to vote and that only a small minority was opposed to such elections, which he said will probably be held on Dec. 16.

The election was originally scheduled for Nov. 4, but was called off earlier this month by the independent electoral council due to a lack of funds.

"The most significant change compared to 1987 has been the conversion of military leaders to support of elections," he said.

The last attempt at free elections here was on Nov. 29, 1987. The election collapsed when thugs supported by the military shot and hacked at least 34 people at polling places.

Haiti has been ruled by dictators for most of its history since

winning independence from France in 1804.

Carter met Friday with President Ertha Pascal-Trouillot, the Electoral Council, officials of the co-governing Council of State, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herard Abraham along with other government officials and political and civic leaders.

On Aug. 14, the council of state broke off relations with Mrs. Pascal-Trouillot, charging her with being an obstacle to elections.

But Carter said the Council of State had not called for her resignation and that it is "giving full support to the Electoral Council and electoral process."

The Pascal-Trouillot administration has been criticised for not arresting two former interior and defence ministers, Roger Lafontant and ex-Maj.-Gen. Williams Regala. Both served Jean Claude Duvalier's authoritarian rule, which ended in 1986.

"Unfortunately, they are still in Haiti," Carter said.

Lafontant was the head of the feared Paramilitary Security Force known as the Tonton Macoutes and Regala the interior and defence minister during the 1987 election.

Angolan peace talks to resume

LISBON (R) — Angolan peace talks resume this week with the two backstage players in one of Africa's nastiest conflicts finally seated openly at the negotiating table.

The United States and Soviet Union, which backed opposing sides for much of the 15-year civil war, will send observers to the fourth round of talks, Portuguese mediators said.

Officially, they will play a technical rather than political role, but Portugal hopes their expertise and resources will help organise a ceasefire across the big south-west African nation.

Lisbon also cites their experience in bringing neighbouring Namibia to independence from South Africa last March in a deal that included the current phased withdrawal of 50,000 Cuban troops from Angola.

But Jose Durao Barroso, Portugal's foreign affairs secretary of state who chaired the three previous frustrating sets of Angolan peace talks, says there is deep distrust between Angola's leftist government and U.S.-backed UNITA rebels.

He believes, however, the presence of the superpowers at the talks, expected to begin early next week in or near Lisbon, could lend a form of international guarantee to any agreements and boost the confidence of both sides.

"The United States and Soviet Union are in fact involved in the Angolan process and it would be good if they also took some responsibility for finding a solution," he said earlier this month.

Civil war erupted in 1975 after Angola became independent from Portugal, preoccupied at the time with its own post-revolutionary power struggles.

The Marxist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), supported by Moscow during a long struggle against the Portuguese, seized power with the help of Soviet aid and advisers and thousands of Cuban soldiers.

The main rival liberation movement UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) was for years backed by the South African Armed Forces. Later Washington took over, pumping in millions of dollars in arms and giving political support.

The new climate helped open a dialogue between UNITA and the MPLA in April. But the third round of talks last month was deadlocked over UNITA's demand for formal recognition before signing a ceasefire.

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Munshi alleged that two of the most influential members of her government and her Pakistan People's Party had their phones tapped.

Pakistani president sees no war with India

PEKING (R) — Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan said Sunday he saw no possibility of war with India and that recent border clashes in disputed Kashmir were no cause for concern.

Ishaq Khan told reporters at the end of a four-day visit to Peking that Pakistan and China were strengthening defence cooperation but he had not discussed with Chinese leaders the need for Chinese aid in the event of war with India.

"War is an anathema in today's context of reconciliation and détente. As a nation we abhor war. We did not discuss on this occasion the possibility of going to war with India," he said.

"I don't see that possibility," Ishaq Khan added.

On Friday, Pakistani and Indian troops traded artillery fire across the line of control that divides their armies in Kashmir in what appeared to be a worsening of their historic conflict in the Himalayan region.

"There have been some clashes but I don't think they are serious," Ishaq Khan said.

Pakistan said its forces in Kashmir repulsed a ground attack by Indian troops while India said the artillery duel began only after Pakistani forces tried to intrude.

Since independence from Britain in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over Kashmir, where Muslims on the Indian-ruled side have mounted a secessionist uprising.

India, which controls two-thirds of the Kashmir, accuses Pakistan of training and arming Muslim militants there.

Islamabad, which maintains that Kashmiris should be free to hold a plebiscite on their future, denies the charges.

China is a close ally of Pakistan and treated Ishaq Khan as chief guest of honour at Saturday's opening ceremony of the Asian Games in Peking.

Asked about their defence cooperation, Ishaq Khan said China had been a major arms supplier over the years and had helped establish Pakistan's defence industry.

"We consider from time to time the challenges we face to our security," he said.

The president said they had made progress in talks on a Chinese nuclear power plant offered to Pakistan by Premier Li Peng during a visit to Islamabad last year. No details were given.

During his stay in Peking — his first foreign visit as president — Ishaq Khan met Li, President Yang Shangkun, Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin and other senior figures.

Truce holds in Liberia

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP) — Fighting has abated in the Liberian capital of Monrovia, where four warring armies appear to be honouring a ceasefire called by rebel leader Charles Taylor.

Fighters of rival rebel Prince Johnson clashed Saturday with remnants of slain President Samuel Doe's army, but the fighting halted in the afternoon, according to residents quoted by the British Broadcasting Corp. (BBC).

A battle between Taylor's fighters and the multinational West African army also subsided Saturday, the news agency Agence France-Presse reported.

The ceasefire call has renewed hope that food, including 5,000 tons of rice provided by the U.S. government, could be delivered to the devastated capital. Starving Monrovia have been reduced to eating dogs.

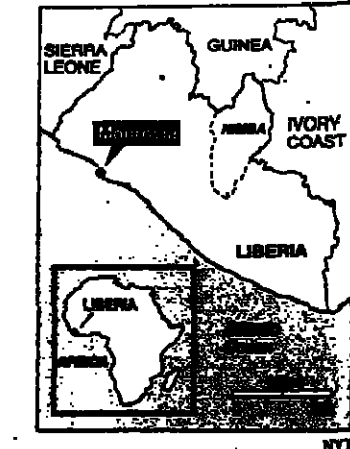
Taylor, announcing the ceasefire at a news conference Friday, said he wanted peace talks but would never settle for an agreement that did not leave him as president. He has offered cabinet posts to his rivals.

West African leaders, who sent a 3,000-man task force to Monrovia last month to stop the fighting, have not commented on Taylor's ceasefire announcement.

The executive secretary of the 16-nation Economic Community of West African States advised caution.

"Let's wait ... and not preempt anything," Abass Bundu said Saturday in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Taylor has declared himself president of Liberia, but so have three other people — rival rebel Prince Johnson; Brig. Gen. David Nimley, a former aide to Doe; and Amos Sawyer, an



opposition figure who was chosen at an Aug. 30 conference of Liberian exiles.

Taylor's claim to the presidency rests on the fact that his army is the biggest and because he started the Liberian war by invading from Ivory Coast on Dec. 24, attacking President Doe as corrupt.

West African military sources speculated that Taylor was trying to buy time with the ceasefire, or that he realised he cannot outgun the West Africans, who sent warplanes to bomb his artillery batteries last weekend.

Leaders of the West African Task Force settled their dispute Saturday over the command of the force, which includes troops from Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

Nigeria had announced Friday it was sending a general to take command of the force. But Gambia and Ghana protested, saying only the Economic Community of West African States as a whole could decide who was in command.

Woman awake through caesarian wins damages

LONDON (R) — A British woman who stayed awake through a caesarian birth despite having been given an anaesthetic was awarded £16,500 (\$31,000) in damages by a court.

Janice Delaney, 40, was given a paralytic drug but was inadequately anaesthetised and suffered pain and terror during the delivery of her second child at a hospital in northern England more than 10 years ago, her lawyer said.

The effects of the drug kept her from alerting the operating team. After the birth, Delaney told midwives and a doctor about her experience, but they said she had been dreaming or had imagined it. It was not until five years later that it was proved she had been awake. Her lawyer, Jane Tracey-Foster, told the court that liability was admitted by the local health authority earlier this year.

Surrogate mother fights for custody of baby

SANTA ANA, California (R) — A surrogate mother fighting the genetic parents for custody of the baby she bore for them, has asked a judge to give the couple temporary control of the child rather than have it placed in a foster home. Superior Court Judge Richard Parslow had adjourned the case until next Thursday when Anna Johnson, who acted as a "human incubator" for Mark and Crispina Calvert, made her unusual request. The judge agreed to give the Calverts temporary control of the two-day-old boy pending the court's decision on custody. The question of temporary control arose because of the infant's pending release from the hospital. Parslow, who has been given the task of a latter-day King Solomon, said he would decide Thursday who would have permanent custody of the child.

"This is a sticky case. The lawyers and I are still trying to figure out what to do next," he said. Johnson, the first surrogate mother in the United States to seek custody of a child not genetically linked to her, had earlier said through her lawyer she would consider shared permanent custody of the child. But the child's genetic parents, the Calverts, said they would rather see him handed over to foster parents than be placed in Johnson's care.

Suspected Peruvian rebels kill former minister, son

LIMA (Agencies) — Suspected Maoist Shining Path guerrillas killed Peru's former Labour Minister Orestes Rodriguez and his son Oscar as they drove in a Lima suburb Saturday night, police said.

Three men hurled dynamite charges and fired sub-machineguns at the car, a police spokesman said.

Radio reports said one of Rodriguez's nephews and his grandson were also injured in the attack but police were unable to confirm this immediately.

Rodriguez served as labour minister during a wave of labour unrest in 1987 under the former government of President Alan Garcia.

Garcia, who handed power over to President Alberto Fujimori last July 28, was one of the first politicians to rush to the scene of Saturday's attack, witnesses said.

The attack came two days after Rodriguez's party, still blamed for most Peruvians for the one million per cent inflation reached during its rule, celebrated the 60th anniversary of its foundation.

Western diplomats do not rule out the possibility that Rodriguez's killing might signal a Shining Path campaign of reprisals against the former government.

Garcia is being investigated by parliament over his alleged responsibility in ordering police and army troops to kill nearly 300 Shining Path guerrillas during uprisings at three Lima jails in 1986.

Saturday's killing took place after Rodriguez left a party celebrating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Aprista Party.

Shining Path rebels also burned two state-owned buses in a poor Lima neighbourhood, police said. The burnings occurred almost simultaneously with the attack on Rodriguez.

In the city of Pisco, 200 kilometres south of Lima, police said a column of some 50 Shining Path rebels killed one man and burned three farms.

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Wartime graduates finally attend their graduation

LONDON (AP) — Members of Manchester University's class of 1940 embraced and fought back tears at their graduation ceremony — 50 years after the original event was canceled for fear of Hitler's bombs.

"The university is so sorry to have kept you waiting for so long," Professor Brian Rodger told them. "You have been extremely patient." In 1940, the year they completed their degrees, France had just fallen to the invading Germans, Hitler had begun his bombing blitz on Britain and the university was in a "particularly nervous state," he said.

Graduation ceremonies were canceled "for fear of enemy action." The 82 elderly graduates lined up to be presented to Professor John Griffith, the university's chancellor, as friends and relations applauded. Loudest applause was given to Una Andrews, whose letter to the university prompted the special ceremony. "I don't deserve any credit but it has made a lot of people happy. Many have come and thanked me," Mrs. Andrews said. Fellow graduate Henry Cowan, an architecture professor who emigrated to Australia in 1953, said: "I got a letter one day which more or less started off 'are you still alive?' I thought the ceremony was a very nice idea and decided to come."

Princess Anne cautioned twice for speeding

LONDON (R) — Britain's Princess Anne was stopped twice in one week for breaking the speed limit near her country home, police said.

The princess, who has already had several brushes with the law over her driving, was cautioned for breaking a 60-mile (96 km) an hour limit in late July and again in early August. In 1977, the 40-year-old princess, Queen Elizabeth's only daughter, was fined £40 (\$74) for driving on a motorway at nearly 100 miles (160 km) an hour, a conviction that followed a number of police warnings.

Vietnam to accept new category of boat people

BANGKOK (AP) — Vietnamese boat people who have fled to Hong Kong will be repatriated at a quicker rate under an agreement reached between Vietnam, Britain and U.N. officials, the official Vietnam News Agency said.

It said the agreement was reached in talks in Hanoi this past week with a delegation of senior officials of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Britain and its colony Hong Kong.

The two sides agreed to accelerate the existing voluntary repatriation programme as well as the repatriation of those Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong "not opposed to returning to Vietnam," the report said.

The report did not say if it also applied to the tens of thousands of boat people stuck in camps in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and other Asian countries.

It also did not elaborate on the distinction between those voluntarily returning and those "not opposed" to returning, but it was apparently a way of avoiding forced repatriation.

The brief report, incompletely monitored due to reception prob-

lems, was dated Saturday and seen in Bangkok Sunday.

The delegation, which included Hong Kong Secretary for Security Alistair Asprey, flew to Hanoi Wednesday aboard a chartered airplane that also carried 110 Vietnamese who volunteered to return home.

Repatriation has replaced resettlement as the focus of efforts to relieve the problem because, many officials say, Vietnamese leaving their country in recent years are not refugees fleeing political persecution but illegal immigrants seeking better economic conditions.

In Hong Kong, Governor Sir David Wilson described the agreement as an important step to accelerate the return of non-refugees to Vietnam.

Wilson told reporters he hopes the repatriation programme will begin before the end of this year, adding:

In late July, U.S. Secretary of States James Baker told South East Asian nations that the United States would continue to oppose forced repatriation but could accept the new category of "those who do not object."

Filipinos resent bases due to U.S. colonial role

MANILA (AP) — Students and national leaders rail against the American military presence in the Philippines despite opinion surveys that show broad Filipino support for the U.S. bases.

No prominent politician unequivocally supports the bases, which U.S. officials claim pump \$1 billion a year into the economy and provide 100,000 jobs in a nation facing political instability and a possible recession.

The ironies illustrated how few people define Philippine public policy; and how much some Filipinos fear continued influence by their old colonial rulers.

"You must understand that other Asian people, the Singaporeans, and Japanese and the Koreans, can deal easier with the Americans because they were never their colonial master," said one Asian diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"For the Filipinos, it's different. The old relationship of ruler and the ruled is a heavy psychological burden," he added.

During four days of talks on the bases last week, no Filipino politician of national status unequivocally supported retaining them after their lease expires in Sept. 1991. The talks adjourned Friday and were expected to resume in about a month.

President Corason Aquino said

the United States and the Philippines should discuss the "orderly withdrawal" of the 40,000 U.S. troops. Defence Department civilians and military dependents at Clark Air Base, the Subic Bay Naval Base and four smaller facilities.

Angry students backed the call last week, chanting "U.S. bases out" in demonstrations near the U.S. embassy. American officials issued dire warnings of bombings and assassinations by anti-bases extremists.

Anti-bases sentiment is strongest in the educated urban middle class that produces university professors, journalists and other opinion-makers. Anti-bases activists are convinced that building opposition to the bases is simply a matter of educating their "uninformed" fellow countrymen.

A survey in March by the Ateneo University found that 35 per cent of the 1,200 Filipinos polled nationwide were unaware that the United States maintains bases here.

Only 18 per cent wanted the bases either phased out or closed immediately. But 40 per cent supported keeping the bases indefinitely.

Unlike the Japanese, West Germans and others who host U.S. facilities, Filipinos perceive

no external military threat. Last year, Mrs. Aquino said the presence of the American forces not only failed to deter Japanese invasion in 1941 but doubtless prompted the attack.

Closing the bases represents an assertion of sovereignty against the United States, which many Filipinos believe still exerts powerful influence over their country more than 40 years after independence.

Over the years, Filipino "nationalism" has come to be defined as standing up to America and its most visible symbol — the bases.

Support for the bases would brand a politician as "anti-nationalist," an unpatriotic tool of the former colonial power.

For many Filipinos, it is an article of faith that the United States interferes in Philippine affairs to guarantee keeping the bases.

That view was reinforced by Washington's longtime support for the late President Ferdinand Marcos. Despite alleged U.S. sponsorship of "democracy," the Americans tolerated Marcos' repressive rule, apparently to maintain their bases here.

Opposition to Marcos, therefore, took on the added character of opposition to the bases. Many of those in the forefront of the

anti-Marcos struggle now hold key positions in the administration, congress and the media.

The bases have become so symbolic of American "intervention" that any U.S. move is seen as a bid to retain the installations.

When Washington ushered out Marcos to Hawaii in the 1986 "people power revolution," many saw the move as a cynical bid by Washington to gain support in the new government for the bases.

In December, U.S. jets flew air cover for pro-Aquino forces against military mutineers seeking to topple her. That was widely interpreted as a bid to pressure her into keeping the bases.

During a devastating earthquake in July, U.S. troops rushed to stricken cities to help in relief operations. Residents of the quake-stricken city of Cabanatuan joked the bases would remain forever because the government simply could not function without them.

"The current talks between the Philippines and the United States should usher in a new relationship between the two countries," said Rev. Joaquin Bernas, president of Ateneo University.

"For the Philippines, it should be a major step in the direction of greater self-reliance and not continuing dependency," he added.